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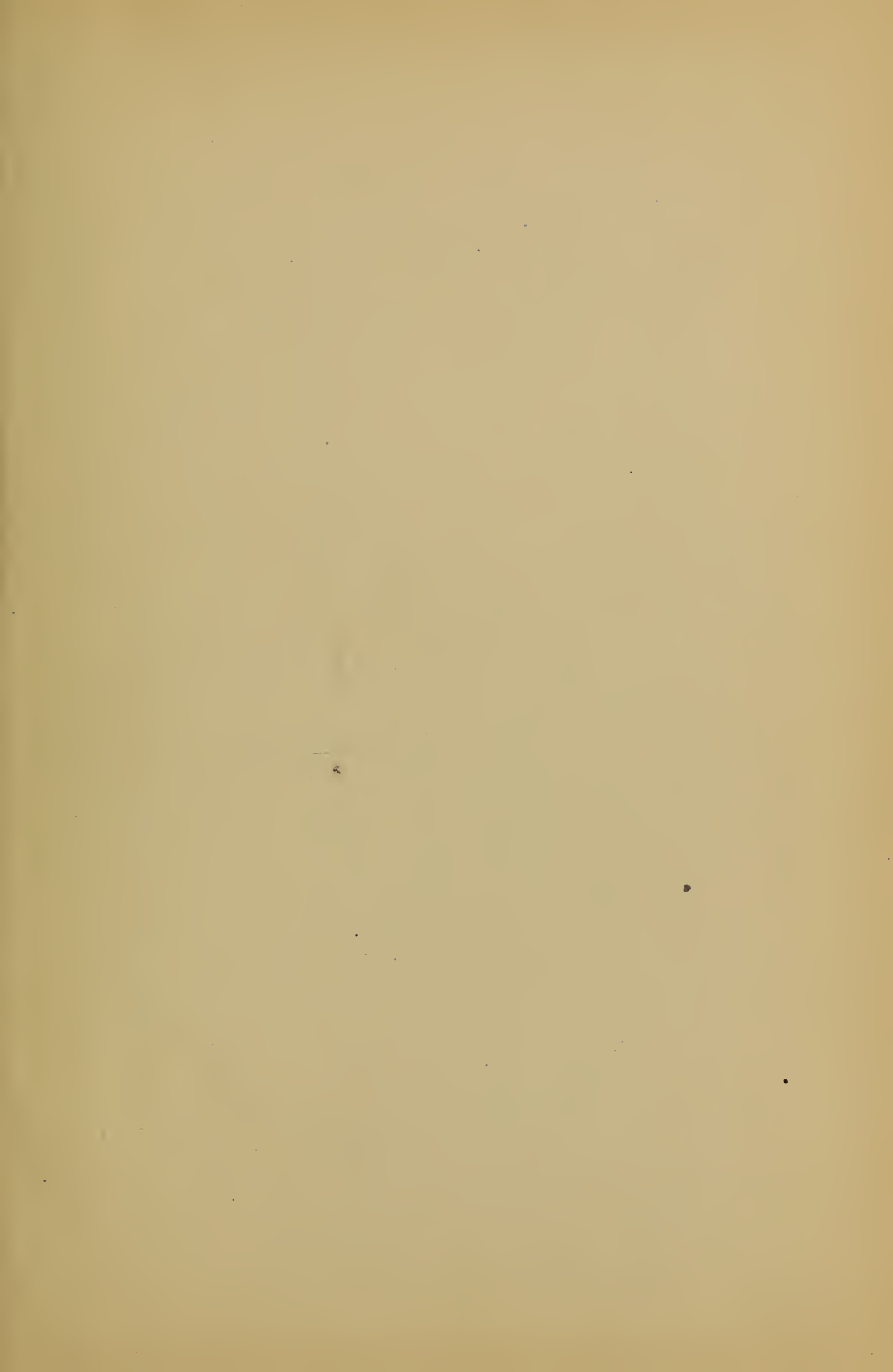


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BIBLE LITERATURE

AN

INTRODUCTORY VIEW

OF THE

BIBLE AND ITS BOOKS

FOR THE GENERAL READER, AND SIXTH GRADE TEXT-BOOK FOR
SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

BY

JOHN A. W. HAAS, D.D.

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Co-Editor of Lutheran Cyclopaedia

WITH A SHORT INTRODUCTION BY

THEODORE E. SCHMAUK, D. D., EDITOR

General Council Graded System of Bible Study

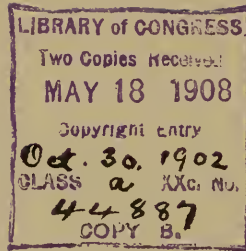
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INTRODUCTION.

This book is a popular introduction to the Bible, written by a scholar familiar with every phase of ancient and recent Biblical criticism; and yet firm in adherence to the orthodox doctrine of the Word of God. The Bible, in its external form, is a book, or rather a whole library of more than fifty books, produced by a large number of different authors, and with different purposes and ends in view. Its writers represent historical periods of time extending over many centuries.

In order to understand the Bible as a whole, and as its writers intended it to be read, long before the various books were separated into chapters and verses, it is necessary to have some clear knowledge of each one of the books of the Old and the New Testament. This concise introduction to the Bible presents such a knowledge, both of the purpose of the inner contents as a whole, and also of the outer nature and form of the book in question.

Bible Literature comes to a large public as the concluding volume of a graded series of text-books used in Church-schools and Colleges, embodying a system of thorough preparation for the detailed study of the Bible text in detached sections. Thousands, who have mastered first the

beautiful Bible stories, and then seen them woven and developed into Biblical History; which in turn was enshrined in its external background in a study of Bible Geography; and elevated into a study of personality, character and motive in Bible Biography; and of principles and doctrines in Bible Teachings, now come finally to a review of each of the individual books of the Bible, as historical and literary units, and as a foundation for a better understanding and deeper grasp on God's living, saving and abiding Word. It is this fact which has determined the outer cast and inner content of the work, and has debarred the author from entering more fully into technical fields.

THEODORE E. SCHMAUK,
General Editor.

PREFACE.

The place of this book in the Graded Series determines its character ; but all who seek a simple and short statement of Biblical literature from an orthodox point of view may be aided by it. Its use as the last and highest text-book of a system explains its form and also its limitations. Among the latter are the running of the matter into a mould of 52 Chapters to correspond to the Sundays of one year, the precedence of the New Testament to conform in a measure to the Church year, the necessarily uniform length of each lesson to meet the time-limit of Sunday-school teaching, and the following of the order of the books as they are in the Bible rather than their historical order. The attainment of those to be taught and the restrictions of space made it necessary to simplify, and as a rule to refer only to the inner, readily apparent and controllable testimony of a book as to its time and author.

But while the outer historical testimony has not been given, the positions taken accord with the clearest and best external historical evidence. Where critical questions have become or are becoming more or less known they are indicated in this book and the line of defense shown, mostly in footnotes. Those who know the literature will readily see what has been consulted. The best and latest works have been considered. The positions taken are the conservative ones. In the New Testament they have solid ground. The discussions on the Old Testament are still in progress. Therefore older positions are sometimes taken, because they are still the

most commendable. After the wave of rationalism has spent itself on the Old Testament, and the one-sided division into sources has had its day, there may be changes necessary in parts. At present there is no Old Testament scholar of great standing whose scientific teaching, would not, if it were the truth, detract from the content, reliability and truthfulness of central matters, and injure the record and revelation of God to His ancient people. Therefore it is better to be conservative than to be modern and in fashion with destructive tendencies.

The essential position of this volume is that of our Lutheran Church. In all the framework of style, authorship, history, the divine Word is to be seen, not as a law, but as the power of God unto salvation. The saving centre is Christ, either hoped for or appeared. While the author may have erred in human, historical matters, he has sought very scrupulously not in the least to injure the divine content, and by a wrong claim of freedom to shake the confidence of any soul in that Word, which is the true light unto our feet. If this aim has been approximately fulfilled, then this book will not have been in vain. May God overlook all faults and errors and use what is profitable to His glory in the enlightenment and salvation of souls!

October, 1902.

J. H.

ON THE USE OF THIS BOOK AS A TEXTBOOK.

The teachers who are to use this book as well as the pupils, must study it carefully and with the Bible always in hand. The references should be constantly looked up. The heavy-faced figures denote the chapter of the book studied, the plain figures the verse. The central thought and plan of a Biblical book ought to be known thoroughly, even if the division in detail is not so firmly retained in the memory. The literary and historical parts of each book give the human side; while the spiritual character and the prophecies of the Messiah unfold the divine side of the Bible. It is of great importance that the teacher should emphasize the spiritual lessons, and what value each book has in reference to Christ, Who is the centre of the Bible. The closing paragraph of each chapter is an attempt at a summary of the main spiritual truths of the book treated. The practical lessons are not intended to be exhaustive, but to indicate to the teacher how the main lessons are to be impressed as teaching points. Every chapter is intended to constitute a lesson by itself, and is to be studied Bible in hand. A good method of recitation, where there is time, is to have part of the scholars looking up and reading the references. Teachers will find questions on every chapter, prepared by a friend, at the close of the book.

J. H.

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Bible Literature.

THE BIBLE.—ST. MATTHEW.

CHAPTER I.

The Bible, God's Word to man, records revelation and its history. It is itself, as such record, also revelation. A light unto our feet, it directs; quick and powerful, it discerns our very thoughts to show us our sins. It is the power of God unto salvation, as we search it to find Christ, of whom it everywhere testifies.

Its Contents.—This wonderful Book of books is a whole library of literature. It contains stately prose and forceful poetry. Simple stories and annals of history, plain narratives and descriptions of dramatic power, lyrics and orations are found in it. The literature of a nation, covering thousands of years, has come to classic expression within its covers. The record of the rise of Christianity, the faith of faiths, is preserved in memoirs and letters, written within the space of about fifty years.

Its Unity.—But despite this diversity of the books of the Bible, and their difference in time, style, character and language, there is a wonderful unity, which makes the Bible *one Book*. The Old Testament is the truth in development and preparation for the New Testament. The New Testament is the book of fulfillment in Christ. But the Old Testament agrees in purpose and aim with the highest thought of the New Testament.

Its Inspiration.—This unity is due to the divine Spirit, who

moved the holy men of God to write, and who, in the progress of the history of Israel, shows the need and, with increasing light, the coming of the great Saviour.

The New Testament contains the picture of the Saviour. The four gospels are the historical memoirs of Jesus. The Acts report the beginnings of the history of the Church. In the epistles are unfolded the doctrines of the life of the Christian. The Apocalypse is the prophetic outlook of the Church.

Historically, and in order to note the development of revelation, the Old Testament ought to precede. The New Testament, however, lies nearer to our Christian life and presents the centre and aim of all revelation in Christ Jesus. When we know this aim, we can see more clearly the Old Testament approach to it.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The Bible is God's clear and powerful word to man.
2. It was written in various forms by holy men.
3. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, it is one.
4. Christ is the centre of it.
5. He is proclaimed in history, doctrine and prophecy.

ST. MATTHEW.

The First Gospel in the New Testament was written by Matthew or Levi. Originally it was composed in Aramaic,* as Papias, who was a disciple of John, tells us. It may have been written about 61 A. D.

*Aramaic was the Semitic dialect spoken in the time of Jesus. Jesus spoke this, *e. g.* Talitha kumi, Mark 5: 41; ephphatha, Mark 7: 34.

Not later than 85 A. D. it was rendered completely into Greek.* Its style is smooth and even, and the influence of the Hebrew language is somewhat noticeable throughout the book. St. Matthew is a didactic gospel. Many of its discourses as well as its narrative of miracles are grouped together.¹ The principle of grouping is not chronological. The matter of the book is often arranged to correspond to the sacred number seven. This number plays a part in the genealogy of the first chapter. There are Seven Beatitudes,² Seven Petitions of the Lord's Prayer, Seven Parables,³ and Seven Woes.⁴

¹ Chaps. 13, 23² Chap. 5.³ Chap. 13.⁴ Chap. 23.

The Purpose of St. Matthew is to show Jesus as the Messiah of Israel. It is directed to Jews and Jewish Christians by a Jewish Christian. The genealogy goes back only to Abraham. The King Messiah is the son of David. Jewish words, customs and places are not explained. Prophecy is always appealed to by the constantly recurring words: "that it might be fulfilled." The kingdom which the Messiah brings is called in a Jewish manner, as by no other gospel, "the Kingdom of Heaven." The attitude of Jesus to the law, the temple and its services is seen. The Jews are shown in their sin, and, from the story of the Magi on, their heritage is passing to the Gentiles. The writer is, therefore, not a scribe or Pharisee, but the publican, who has found the better righteousness,⁵ who knows the freedom of God's mercy,⁶ and who ever recurs to the universal term of love, "Your Father which is in heaven." He, too, as no other disciple, reports the promise of eternal duration to the Church and its right of discipline.⁷ But with all the fresh features, Matthew is the gospel of the past. It shows the fulfillment of Judaism. It connects, as the first gospel, most directly with the Old Testament. Still in it there is new wine in new skins.

⁵ 5. 20 ff.⁶ 20. 1 ff.⁷ Matt. 16. 18; 18. 17 ff.

Contents.—St. Matthew's gospel is the story of the King come. He is the son of David, child of Abraham,⁸ born as foretold,⁹ recognized by the Gentiles¹⁰ and rejected by the leaders, and

⁸ 1. 1-17.⁹ 18-25.
¹⁰ 2. 1-12.

* The Greek of the New Testament is called Hellenistic. It is half way between old Greek dialects and modern Greek. Hebrew idioms also influence it.

is the King of the Jews saved by flight and come from Egypt as did Israel afore.¹¹

These beginnings are unfolded. The forerunner prepares the way,¹² the Messiah is designated as Divine Son.¹³ He conquers Satan and upholds the spiritual kingdom.¹⁴

The Word and Works of the King are shown.¹⁵ After the call to repentance¹⁶ and the choice of the first disciples,¹⁷ the healing power of the King appears.¹⁸ The law of His kingdom is the highest fulfillment of the old law.¹⁹ New deeds of mercy mark the Kingdom as one of love.²⁰ Only by self-denial can men enter it,²¹ and be with the King in His power over nature and spirits.²² He chooses twelve messengers²³ to carry on the work after Him, as John, the greatest prophet before the Kingdom, had done.²⁴ For He will be obliged to face not only impenitence,²⁵ but unbelief and murderous envy.²⁶ He opens the eyes of the disciples to the mystery of the Kingdom, its high value, its growth, its conflicts.²⁷ Not received by His own kin,²⁸ the Messiah is brought into contact with Herod's rule,²⁹ and, after new deeds of help and mercy, into conflict with the legal righteousness of the Pharisees.³⁰ To the Gentiles the King then extends His power,³¹ and warns against the heaven of the Pharisees,³² and His disciples learn to confess him.³³

"From that time" the King predicts His passion.³⁴ His disciples do not understand this recurring prophecy of humiliation and glory,³⁵ not even when they see a glimpse of glory.³⁶ Nor are they ready for the other truth of the Kingdom, and they need more faith, less selfishness, more love.³⁷ Their life must be moulded to the law of the Kingdom, as appears in the King's words on marriage and the use of riches. But for the faithful are reserved great rewards.³⁸

The Triumph of the King in Time and Eternity is shown by Matthew.³⁹ With triumph He enters Jerusalem,⁴⁰ announces the curse on the unbelieving,⁴¹ is victorious in His words against the great council, the Pharisees and the Sadducees,⁴² and stands forth as David's Son and Lord.⁴³ Mightily are the Pharisees rebuked.⁴⁴ Jerusalem, which will not receive her Messiah, will fall, as at last all kingdoms shall before this King.⁴⁵

11 2. 13 ff.

12 3. 1-12.
13 13-17.
14 4. 1-11.

15 12—
16 16. 19.
17 4. 17.
18 18-22.
19 23 ff.

19 5-7.

20 8. 1-17.
21 18-22.
22 23—
23 9. 34.
24 10.

24 11. 1-19.

25 20-30.
26 12.

27 13. 1-52.
28 53-58.
29 14. 1-12.

30 13—
31 15. 20.
32 21-28.

33 29—
34 16. 12.
35 16. 18-20.

36 21—
37 20. 34.

38 16. 21-28.
39 17. 1-13.

40 14—
41 18. 35.

42 19. 20-34.

43 21-25.
44 21. 1 ff.
45 17-22.

46 23—
47 22. 40.
48 22. 41-46.
49 23.

50 24-25.

The Passion with its humiliation, fulfilling the prophecy of old, takes place.⁴⁶ The **victory of resurrection** follows.⁴⁷ The King ^{46 26-27.}
^{47 28. 1-15.} has universal power and His disciples are sent to all nations.⁴⁸ ^{48 16 ff.}

Summary.—The King, sent first to Israel to fulfill the words spoken to the fathers, comes with a spiritual kingdom. Israel does not receive Him. The Gentiles enter in. Messiah becomes King of all, as through suffering He passes to universal rule.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament.
2. He is the glory and hope of Israel.
3. His kingdom shall come to all men.
4. It is established by words and works.
5. Its way leads through suffering.
6. The King is finally victorious.

ST. MARK.

CHAPTER II.

St. Mark and the Three Other Gospels.—As we approach the Gospel of St. Mark, we are struck with its great similarity to the Gospel of St. Matthew. Practically all of St. Mark is in St. Matthew, except 4. 26-29; 9. 36-40; 11. 11; 12. 41-44. But there are many variations in details and in single words, even where Mark most agrees with Matthew and follows the same order.¹ This relation of difference and yet likeness is also found in comparing Mark with Luke, or Matthew with Luke, although it is different in degree. Out of 2,890 verses, 450 are common to all three gospels. Matthew and Mark have most in common, and Matthew and Luke are most divergent. Mark is the common centre. One-half of Mark is found in Matthew; one-fourth of Luke is found in Matthew; one-third of Mark is found in Luke.

The Synoptists.—Because the first three Gospels cover so much of the same ground, and present a common view of Christ, differing from John, they are called *Synoptists* (those who view together). Their agreement, which does not invalidate their difference*, was due to the original common preaching of the Gospel by the disciples. Certain stories and words of Christ came to be told together and the same form was used in the repetition, whether spoken “publicly or from house to house,”² or whether instruction was being given to new Christians.³ While the Old Testament is spoken of as being “read,” the gospel is spoken of under the words “testimony,” “preaching,”

¹ Matt. 14. 22—
16. 12.
Mark 6. 45—
8. 21.

² Acts 20. 20.

³ Acts 10. 37.

*Matthew has peculiar to himself: 1. 1-25; 2. 1-23; 12. 5, 11; 13. 24-30, 36-43, 47-50, 51ff; 14. 28-31; 15. 13ff; 16. 17-19; 17. 24-27; 18. 10, 22-35; 19. 10-12, 28; 20. 1-16; 21. 28-32; 25. 1-13, 31. 46; 26. 52ff; 27. 3-10, 19, 51-53, 62-66; 28. Luke will be given in the next lesson.

“speaking,” “tradition,” “word of message,” “messages.”* But these spoken accounts were soon written down.⁴ The Gospel of Mark ⁴ Luke 1. 1 ff. seems to have been one of these early written accounts. Of St. Mark Papias says, that he wrote as Peter’s interpreter, but not in chronological order. Besides Mark, we find another written account, named “Oracles of the Lord,” by Matthew, perhaps the Aramaic Matthew. And Luke⁵ must have had still other sources. Each one, then, rested on ⁵ cf. 9. 54 ff. oral accounts. Probably Mark relied on them altogether. Matthew, in addition, employed an original account written in the Aramaic. Luke searched carefully into the oral accounts. Perhaps he knew the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, and certainly other lost accounts. Each writer selected what was in accord with his plan, and wrote in his own style guided by the Holy Spirit. Such selection gave a true picture, but not a total one. For this not only the three, but the four gospels are needed.

The Style of St. Mark.—Mark was the earliest gospel written in *Greek*. It was written about 65 A. D., and is from the pen of John Mark.† Its style is vivid, and full of minute touches, which show an eye-witness. Scene is rapidly followed by scene, introduced by Mark’s favorite “straightway,” and the descriptive, historical tense. Simplicity and naturalness, living power and striking force, freshness and fragrance are prominent, but the Greek is rough. In his gospel, Mark did not follow the style of Peter, whose interpreter he was. His vocabulary and forms are different. But the spirit of the gospel, its power and vividness accord well with impressions received from the active, energetic Peter. That Mark interprets him in this gospel is shown by such personal touches as appear in the selection of the first disciples,⁶ the visit at Peter’s house,⁷ the search of Peter for ⁶ 1. 16. ⁷ 29.

*Acts 8. 4, 5; 9. 20; 14. 7; 19. 13; Rom. 1. 15; 1 Cor. 1. 19, 21; 2 Cor. 1. 19; 10. 13; 11. 4; Gal. 1. 8, 16, 23; 4. 13; Eph. 6. 19; 1 Thess. 2. 2, 13; 2 Thess. 2. 15; 3. 6; Tit. 1. 3; Heb. 4. 2.

†The only disputed part is chapter 16. 9-20. This is not found in many early MSS. and Church Fathers. It differs in style and vocabulary, and looks like an epitome from Luke. An Armenian MS., lately discovered, mentions with it the name of Aristion, who was a disciple of the Lord. Whether we accept this, or argue from similarities for a later addition by Mark, the genuineness of the words are not affected, and find support from other parts of the New Testament.

8 1. 35 ff.

9 5. 41,

10 6. 31.

11 8. 29 cp.
with Matt.

12 14. 30, 68, 72.
16. 17.

Jesus,⁸ the very words spoken to the daughter of Jairus,⁹ the invitation of Jesus to His disciples to rest,¹⁰ the humble omission of Christ's praise of Peter,¹¹ the cock crowing twice,¹² etc.

The Aim of St. Mark's Gospel.—It is Mark's aim to relate the gospel as the message of Jesus, the *Son of God* and *Lord of the World*, full of power. Everywhere mighty miracles stand forth. Christ's supernatural power is shown. This comes into the world against the world's power. Mark is the gospel for the Romans. That it was written for them is indicated by its Latin terms. The Romans, with their thoughts of power, were to see the real Lord. Thus Mark was the gospel for the present. Its many incidents brought it near to the active Roman. But only the beginning¹³ of the work of the Lord is told in the gospel. That work still continues through the Lord's disciples.¹⁴ They show His co-working of power. The life of the Lord is therefore portrayed according to the thought of His divine lordship, and not reported according to locality or time. And though Mark had "no intention of giving a connected account of the Lord's oracles," yet he "committed no error while he thus wrote some things as he remembered them. For he was careful of one thing, not to omit any of the things which he had heard, and not to state any of them falsely" (Papias).

Contents of this Gospel.—St. Mark's *Gospel of the Son of God* begins with John the Baptist, who prepares the way for the Lord. He calls men to repentance and points them to the "Mightier One."¹⁵ The Lord appears, endued by the Spirit, calls His disciples, and begins with mighty words and deeds.¹⁶ The enemies oppose, and charge Him with blasphemy, unholiness, breaking the traditions and the Sabbath law. He answers, and shows His power to heal, forgive sins, bring a new kingdom, and to be Lord of the Sabbath.¹⁷ But hatred remains. Therefore the Lord selects His messengers for the future,¹⁸ and schools them, as He is assailed even by His own brethren.¹⁹ The messengers receive the lessons of the kingdom hidden from others.²⁰ Nature, sickness, Satan, death fall under the Lord's conquest, and His disciples begin to believe.²¹ His humble earthly origin does not disturb them;²² and they make a trial of their work.²³

15 1. 2-8.

16 9-45.

17 2. 1-3. 6.

18 3. 7-19.

19 20-35.

20 4. 1-32.

21 33-
5. 43.

22 6. 1-6.

23 7-13.

The story of the death of John the Baptist, beginning the second part of Mark, points to the Lord's end. But as Herod thinks that John has risen, this is an indication of the Lord's victory.²⁴ But now ²⁴ 6. 14-29. the disciples are to be led by miracles to see the divine Lordship.²⁵ ²⁵ 30-56. They do not yet see, but are freed from legalism and learn the real law of purity.²⁶ Aroused anew by miracles, warned against the Pharisees, ²⁶ 7. 1-37. they, like the blind, gradually receive sight, and confess the Christ.²⁷ ²⁷ 8. 1-30. The people do not yet thus see Him. Even the disciples do not understand that suffering is necessary to Lordship.²⁸ Only a few ²⁸ 31—
behold the glorious promise; but in the conflict faith is needed.²⁹ In ²⁹ 9. 1. 2-29. view of suffering, a child-like, helping, pure, peaceable love must obtain.³⁰ The new life of love appears in the sanctity of the home, ³⁰ 30-50. the right of children, and the proper use of possessions.³¹ The way ³¹ 10. 1-31. of suffering is entered upon, as the way of self-sacrificing love.³² For ³² 32-52. a short time triumph appears, but the enemies plot. Yet the Lord prophesies the final triumph over the Jews and the world.³³ The ³³ 11-13. sufferings are endured.³⁴ The Lord rises, triumphant in power, and ³⁴ 14, 15. sends forth His servants, exhibiting His might in their work.³⁵ ³⁵ 16. 1-20.

Summary.—This is the story of the lion of Judah. His power shall rule the world. His Lordship is that of the Son of God, mighty in word, but still mightier in deed. He will prevail even through suffering and death. His work shall be carried out by His disciples, selected and trained for this purpose.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Jesus is the Lord of the World.
2. His power is seen in His works.
3. Enmity, suffering, death do not destroy Him.
4. He co-works with His disciples.

ST. LUKE.

CHAPTER III.

The Style of St. Luke's Gospel.—The third gospel, written about 75 A. D., is many-sided and versatile. Its style is adapted to the various subjects of which it treats. When peculiarly Jewish situations occur and Jewish words are reported, there is a strong Jewish coloring in form and expression. But otherwise the style is good Greek and the form is artistic and historical. The opening paragraph is the only passage in the New Testament which reads like a Greek period of classic purity.

St. Luke combines beautiful picturesqueness with sound judgment and power. Mark is superior in minute living touches, but Luke presents large, complete scenes. Therefore art has most largely drawn from Luke. His style and speech show the polished Greek physician, who is, however, sensible of the spiritual depth of Israel's truth. As an observer he is accurate, and it is his purpose to tell the story of the gospel carefully from the beginning. He declares that he will go back to eye-witnesses and test the accounts that have hitherto been written.¹ The gospel is the first part of Luke's work, the Acts continue his writing.

1. 1-4

Luke and Paul.—Luke was a follower of Paul. His gospel breathes Paul's spirit, and there are also many words alike in their writings. But though this points to a close relation between them, it cannot prove that Luke actually depended on Paul for his knowledge of the gospel.

The peculiar parts * of Luke show the Pauline conception of Christianity most clearly.

Narratives Peculiar to Luke.—Most noticeable among the

* 1. 1-30; 2. 1-52; 3. 10-14; 5. 4-9; 7. 11-17, 36-50; 8. 1-3; 9. 51-56; 10. 17-20, 25-42; 11. 5-8, 27, 28; 12. 13-21, 35-37, 47-49, 54-56; 13. 11-17, 31-33; 14. 1-14, 28-33; 15. 11-32; 16. 1, 2, 14, 15, 19-31; 17. 7-19, 23-32; 18. 1-14; 19. 2-10, 41-44; 23. 6-12, 27-31, 39-45; 24. 13-53.

special possessions of St. Luke, which are most prominent from chapter 9. 51, to chapter 18, are the parable of the good Samaritan,² of the rich man,³ of the prodigal son,⁴ of the unjust steward,⁵ of Dives and Lazarus,⁶ the healing of the ten lepers,⁷ the story of the unjust judge,⁸ of the pharisee and publican,⁹ and the incident of Zacchaeus.¹⁰ Luke wrote for a young man, Theophilus, a Greek. But his gospel, though directed to one man, is general in its whole tenor.

Its Universal Character.—St. Luke is the gospel for the Greeks. It looks to the future. It does not, like St. Matthew, see in Jesus simply the Messiah. It exhibits Him in a universal light, and traces His descent not from Abraham, but from Adam. It views Christ the Son of man, not as the universal ruler as Mark does, but as the *great Physician and Saviour of all sinners*.

The universality and freeness of this gospel make it the great missionary power. Luke's gospel is the historical foundation for Paul's preaching of the gospel as the power of salvation to every one that believeth.

Its Contents.—St. Luke reports the early Christian hymns. From the Gloria in Excelsis,¹¹ a new note of life and joy goes forth into the world. The fulfillment of the old promises is gladly voiced in the Benedictus,¹² the Magnificat,¹³ and the Nunc Dimittis.¹⁴ A new spiritual kingdom is seen.

This gospel begins with hymns and ends with praises. It is full of thanksgiving and glorifying of God.¹⁵ And as it emphasizes thanksgiving, it is also the gospel of prayer. Jesus is shown as praying at His baptism, after cleansing the leper, before calling the twelve, at His transfiguration, on the cross, and at His last breath. He teaches and exhorts His disciples to unceasing, persistent petition, to holy importunity.¹⁶

The Graciousness and Mercy of Christ are most clearly portrayed. With glad-tidings of good will to men, with grace doth He come to all.¹⁷ He enters the world with angel carols, and departs with benedictions. He is born in Bethlehem in poverty, and vanishes on Olivet with pierced hands upraised to bless. Thus doth He come for all flesh.¹⁸

2 10. 25 ff.
3 12. 13 ff.
4 15. 11 ff.
5 16. 1 ff.
6 19 ff.
7 17. 11 ff.
8 18. 1 ff.
9 9 ff.
10 19. 2 ff.

11 2. 14.
12 1. 68-79.
13 46 ff.
14 2. 29 ff.

15 20;
5. 25;
7. 16;
13. 13;
17. 15;
18. 43;
23. 47.
16 11. 5 ff.;
18. 1 ff.;
21. 36.

17 2. 14;
4. 16 ff.;
7. 36 ff.;
18. 14 ff.;
19. 1 ff.;
23. 39 ff.
18 3. 6.

The Weakness of Infancy is made holy. Luke alone tells us of the birth and infancy of John the Baptist, the annunciation, the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth, the songs of the angels, the circumcision, the presentation in the temple, the perfect growth of Jesus.

Woman is uplifted. How pure and tender is the picture of Mary. Women minister to Jesus.¹⁹ For the widow at Nain He has compassion. Mary and Martha²⁰ are well shown. The suffering women are called "daughters."²¹ And the weeping daughters of Jerusalem²² are consoled and warned.

The Lowly.—For all the poor, humble, despised,²³ there is greatest love. The humble are exalted, the hungry are filled, the poor are blessed, the lowly see visions. Lazarus, the poor man with faith in God, is carried into Abraham's bosom. The outcasts are received. The Samaritan, the publican, the harlot, the prodigal, the dying robber are viewed with deep sympathy. For the lost there is help.

The Toleration of Love is taught. It is the Samaritan who is the example. He is good, and not the priest or Levite. The Sons of Thunder dare not destroy the Samaritan village, nor hinder the man who is not against Christ, even if he does not follow them.

Its Historical Order.—While these features are prominent, it is yet St. Luke's purpose to give the story of Christ according to historical order.²⁴ This order is generally, but not invariably followed.

After the preparation for the birth of Jesus,²⁵ the nativity of the Saviour,²⁶ His infancy²⁷ and boyhood²⁸ are pictured. The manifestation of the Saviour²⁹ is followed by His early ministry of teaching and healing in Galilee.³⁰ A later activity in Galilee is portrayed, which contains mostly incidents of two days.³¹ After some final deeds in Galilee the Saviour goes northward. The teaching of the twelve blossoms into confession.³² The incidents of the ministry after leaving Galilee are told, interwoven with many sayings.³³ The journey from Jericho to Jerusalem follows.³⁴ The last days of the Saviour's life,³⁵ and His last hours on earth³⁶ are tenderly portrayed. But the burial is soon succeeded by the victorious and joyous resurrection with the subsequent appearances of Jesus, until His ascension.³⁷

¹⁹ 8. 1 ff.

²⁰ 20. 38 ff.

²¹ 8. 48;

13. 16.

²² 23. 28.

²³ 1. 52;

6. 20 ff.;

8. 2, 3;

12. 16 ff.;

14. 12 ff.;

1 e. 13, 19 ff.

²⁴ 1. 3.

²⁵ 5-80.

²⁶ 2. 1-20.

²⁷ 21-38.

²⁸ 39-52.

²⁹ 3. 1-

4. 13.

³⁰ 1-7. 50.

³¹ 8.

³² 9. 1-50.

³³ 51-

18. 30.

³⁴ 31-

19. 46.

³⁵ 47-

21. 38.

³⁶ 22. 1-

23. 49.

³⁷ 23. 50-

24. 53.

Summary.—St. Luke unfolds most beautifully the growth of Jesus in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and men. From infancy through boyhood to full manhood we follow the Saviour, working and praying. His tenderness, mercy and love shine forth everywhere. But before, above, under and after this human life of Jesus is divine power and eternity. It has come to serve men, to help the weak, uplift the down-trodden, heal the sick, and rescue the perishing. There is no distinction of men. The humblest are the greatest objects of the Saviour's care. The saving health comes to all men and nations, and brings holy freedom, joy and love.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Jesus truly grew in wisdom and stature.
2. His life was filled with prayer and praise.
3. He is the divine healer of sin.
4. All are objects of His mercy, especially the weak and erring.
5. Holy gladness and joy come in Christ.

ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER IV.

The Character of St. John's Gospel.—In approaching St. John we find "the one, true, tenderest, chief gospel, a commentary and exposition of the whole Bible" (Luther). This gospel bears the mark of the beloved, meditative, earnest son of Zebedee. It was probably composed between 80 and 90 A. D., in John's old age. Surprisingly beautiful is the gentle flow and wonderful depth of the gospel. St. John, who still remembers the thoughts of his fellow-apostles,* and knows the very words spoken among themselves, or to them privately by Christ,† is also most intimately acquainted with the Lord's own motives and feelings.‡ This is natural in the disciple who lay in the Lord's bosom, and whom He loved. John has also been testified to as the writer of this gospel, in an appended note.¹ And this is confirmed by the exact knowledge of Jewish opinions, views and customs, § by the accurate information of places, || and by the minute noting of time. ¶ Most vivid, and marking the eye-witness, are the accounts of the cleansing of the temple,² of the feeding of the 5000,³ of the healing of the man born blind,⁴ of the raising of Lazarus,⁵ of the footwashing,⁶ of the betrayal,⁷ etc.

The Language of St. John is most marked. There is no Greek refinement, nor long periods connected by particles. The sentences are simple, short, straightforward, uniform and apparently without literary elegance. But the very absence of adornment and

*2. 11, 17, 22; 4. 27; 6. 19, 60; 12. 16; 13. 36; 20. 9; 21. 12.

†4. 31, 33; 9. 2; 11. 8, 12, 16; 16. 17, 29.

‡2. 24, 25; 4. 1 ff.; 5. 6; 6. 6; 7. 1; 11. 33, 38; 13. 1, 3, 21; 16. 19; 18. 4; 19. 28.

§1. 19-28, 45-49, 51; 2. 6, 13, 22; 4. 25; 5. 1; 6. 4, 14, 15; 7. 2, 26, 27, 31, 37; 11. 55; 12. 13, 34; 13. 1; 18. 28; 19. 31, 42.

||1. 28, 44, 46; 2. 1; 3. 23; 4. 5; 11. 18, 54, etc.

¶1. 29, 35, 39, 43; 2. 1; 4. 6, 46, 52; 6. 22; 7. 14, 37; 11. 6, 17; 12. 1; 19. 14, 31, etc.

art makes the language so powerful and impressive.* Clause follows clause, one co-ordinated with the other. The thought seems to be repeated, and yet it is deepened. The leading thought of the previous sentence is again taken up, but the circle is enlarged, and every new repetition takes a wider sweep, and shows a deeper power. This form is most adapted to St. John's gospel. It expresses simple vision and deep assurance. Without connecting particles strong and striking contrasts are given.

Favorite Words.—St. John seems to have a few words which ever recur. They are such plain words as "believe" (occurring 98 times), "know" (55), "witness" (55), "glory" (55), "world" (78), "life" or "live" (over 50), "light" (23), "name" (25), "truth" (25). Favorite with him are also "abide," "darkness," "love," "keep my word," "the Word," the "Advocate," "come out from God." The proper understanding of St. John's Gospel depends on the comprehension of these words. Plain as they seem, they contain very much *e. g.*, light, life, love.

Characters are clearly and sharply drawn. This is seen in the figures of Andrew, Philip, Nathanael, Peter, Thomas, Nicodemus, Judas, Pilate, Mary, Martha, etc.

St. John and the Synoptists.—St. John stands in contrast with the synoptists. But there is no contradiction. St. John complements the other accounts. He gives a fuller chronology, and allows three years for Christ's ministry. Though not expressly stated, this is indicated in the synoptists. For they not only give too many deeds and words for one year,⁸ and for only a Galilean ministry, but they also show that Jesus was in Jerusalem before His suffering. Else how could He have often desired to gather Jerusalem,⁹ and how without a former stay at Jerusalem can we understand the discipleship of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, reported by the synoptists? Many other minor incidents prove the agreement.

Christ's Discourses.—The language in the discourses is different in St. John. It is directed to the Jews high in station, and not to plain Galileans. The dialogue is frequent, the form dramatic.

* *e. g.* "Jesus wept." "And it was night." "Now Barabbas was a robber."

⁸ *e. g.*, Luke 9
51 ff.

⁹ Matt. 23. 37.

¹⁰ *e. g.*, 8. 24;
¹³ 19.

John shows Jesus more as the pastor than as the preacher. With the synoptists the centre is the "kingdom of God;" with John it is the Lord Himself.¹⁰ He is seen in the pictures of Word, Light, Shepherd, Manna.

¹¹ 2. 19.
¹² 3. 8.
¹³ 14.
¹⁴ 4. 85.

Illustrations.—A single picture stands for a whole parable. Earthly things are not employed to mark a similarity with heavenly things, but as *types* of the heavenly, *e. g.*, the temple,¹¹ the wind,¹² the serpent,¹³ the harvest field,¹⁴ etc.

The Central Problem.—The many questions of the synoptists give way to the one supreme problem, *Who is Christ?* The indications of Matt. 11. 27, 28 are unfolded, so that what is in the background in the synoptists, and appears in glimpses, in special miracles and words, stands in the foreground in St. John, namely the *divine glory of the Only-begotten*. That He is with the Father and before the world, is John's centre. The others go from facts and experiences inward, John proceeds from the eternal and inward outward. All that occurs is a manifestation of the Son. And so close has John been to the Son, that his own thoughts and words seem one with those of the Lord.

¹⁵ 20. 81.

¹⁶ 30—
21. 25.

Its Purpose.—St. John's gospel is the great, *final gospel* for the whole Church. It is the gospel of eternity, the spiritual message of the eternal Son and the incarnate Word. Its keynote is "The Word was made flesh." Its purpose is to show that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of God, that men, believing in Him, might have life."¹⁵ With this aim have its selections been made.¹⁶ Everything centres about Christ. In His presence faith develops, but unbelief grows into hatred. Faith is apprehended in its very depth; but sin is also seen in its abysses. A separation between light and darkness, truth and falsehood, good and evil takes place, as the Son of God comes.

¹⁷ 1. 1-18.

¹⁸ 1-5.
¹⁹ 6-13.
²⁰ 14-18.
²¹ 19—
¹² 50.
²² 1. 19-37.
²³ 38-51.
²⁴ 2. 1-11.
²⁵ 13—
3. 86.

The Word.—The Introduction¹⁷ speaks of Christ as the eternal Word, God.¹⁸ As Word, *i. e.*, the revealer of the Father, He comes to men, and is received or rejected by them¹⁹ as He declares the Father.²⁰ This Word reveals Himself to the world,²¹ in the testimony of the Baptist,²² in the message to and of the disciples,²³ and by the glory of the first sign.²⁴ He is also seen in His work among Jews,²⁵

Samaritans,²⁶ and Galileans.²⁷ This work becomes a conflict as it touches mixed multitudes.²⁸ It leads to a judgment of Christ by men,²⁹ by the evangelist,³⁰ and by Himself,³¹ as He closes His public ministry.

The Christ Reveals Himself to His Disciples.³²—He is glorified in His last discourses,³³ by His love in humiliation,³⁴ in keeping His own,³⁵ in promising the Comforter and His own return,³⁶ and in His high-priestly prayer.³⁷ The glorification in suffering³⁸ follows, as seen in the betrayal,³⁹ in the trial before the Great Council and Pilate,⁴⁰ in crucifixion and burial.⁴¹ Then comes the glorification in resurrection⁴² as Christ manifests Himself to Mary Magdalene,⁴³ to the ten,⁴⁴ and to Thomas with the ten.⁴⁵ The conclusion⁴⁶ is followed by an appendix,⁴⁷ giving Christ's appearance in Galilee, and ending with an attestation of the gospel.

Summary.—St. John, the wonderful gospel of loving meditation, begins with eternity. It shows the eternal Word, who becomes flesh, that in His life men might have light. Some receive Him by faith, and they behold His glory ever more fully. Others, who love darkness more than light, reject Him, and come into condemnation.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Jesus is the eternal Word of God.
2. He comes to bring light and life.
3. As many as believe become children of God.
5. The highest confession of Jesus is "My Lord and My God."
6. Only deep meditation and prayer will lead men to see the revealed mystery of the Son of man and the Son of God.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

CHAPTER V.

11.1.

Characteristics.—With this book the historical writings of the New Testament close. It is linked to the story of Christ, as it shows the beginnings of His Church. It was written, perhaps shortly after the gospel, in 76 A. D., by St. Luke, who also dedicated it to Theophilus, and conceives of it as a continuation of the gospel.¹ The Ascension, with which the gospel ended, forms also the beginning of the Acts. The style and vocabulary agree closely with the gospel. Again, when Luke writes for himself the style is pure; but when he reports the early history and the discourses, the style is more Hebraistic. In the discourses the thoughts and language are characteristic of the preachers, as seen especially in Peter and Paul. In chapter 16. 10-40, and from 20. 1 ff., when “we” is used, Luke reports as an eye-witness. He is everywhere the polished physician, sometimes using a medical term, but open also to the exact terms in other lines, as shown in the story of Paul’s journey to Rome, where the nautical expressions are most correct. Luke has written a true history, with fine skill and historical insight, which enabled him so to choose the material, that the real, inner movement of the early Apostolic Church is clearly seen. The Acts, one in plan and purpose with the gospels, rightly stand after them and before the epistles. For the latter they furnish the broad historic framework. This appears particularly from chapter 13 on, in the part pertaining to Paul.

Relation of Acts to Epistles.—There is no contradiction between the Acts and the epistles, though the accounts may at times differ. The apparent discrepancies between Acts 9. 26-30 and Gal. 1. 17-24, can be solved by remembering that Luke does not desire to report everything, and, therefore, does not speak of Paul being in

Arabia. His purpose is also different. He wishes to show that Paul was received by the Apostles. Paul desires to emphasize his independence. But each one hints at the other side. Again, Acts 15. 1 ff. and Gal. 2. 1 ff., if they refer to the same fact and not different visits, do not necessarily disagree. Paul gives the internal motive and says he went to Jerusalem by revelation; Luke reports the external motive. It is quite natural also that Luke should give the public, Paul the private history. Their accounts, in detail, supplement each other. And the council at Jerusalem cannot be discredited because its effects are not seen in other epistles than Galatians; *e g.* Corinthians. The contest did not exist in the other churches, and therefore the decree of Jerusalem was not needed. Conditions, too, may have changed. When, further, in Acts 15. 35 ff., Luke does not mention about Peter what Paul relates,² he did not do so because it was ² Gal. 2. 11 ff. not necessary. But it is important to note how the narrative in Galatians proves Acts correct. Paul would not have accused Peter of hypocrisy, unless Peter had adopted the view reported in Acts.

The Purpose.—St. Luke, when he wrote the Acts, desired to show how the gospel, which to him was the message of the Saviour of the world, came from the Jews to the world. Jesus had lived among the Jews. To the Jews also Paul everywhere first addressed himself. But they rejected the truth as a people, though individuals believed. Acts tells how the Gentiles entered in, and how the gospel came from Jerusalem to Rome.

“Thus you find in the history of the apostles a fine comment and exposition of this argument of experience; namely, the apostles’ sermons and many examples, how the heathen without law and circumcision came to faith and were saved, against the opinion of the stubborn, self-righteous persons who hold that we can and must be saved through law” (Luther). In tracing this course of the word of the gospel, Luke is calm in the first part, full of quick movement in the middle of the book, but mighty in feeling as the crisis in the life of Paul approaches.

Christ as Lord.—It is not vain repetition, that Luke begins with the ascension of Christ. He portrays, not, as in the gospel,

Christ for us, but the ascended Christ as Lord in His people. The Lord fills the vacant apostleship,³ sends His Spirit,⁴ increases the newly founded congregation.⁵ Through Him is the lame man healed.⁶ He stands at the right hand of God to receive Stephen.⁷ Saul is conquered by Him,⁸ and Ananias does His bidding.⁹ Only by His command Peter abandons his scruples.¹⁰ He calls Paul to Europe.¹¹ He opens Lydia's heart,¹² strengthens Paul in Corinth,¹³ and promises him that he shall be in Rome.¹⁴

The Activity of the Holy Spirit.—But the Lord acts not only by His angel,¹⁵ but through *His Spirit*. The Spirit comes on Pentecost and imparts the gift of tongues.¹⁶ He fills the believers so that they can teach, work and pray.¹⁷ He lives in the congregation,¹⁸ and directs the apostles.¹⁹ Thus is shown the fulfillment of the promise of power.²⁰ The activity of the Spirit in the Church forms a complement to Paul's teaching of the Spirit's power in individual hearts.

From Jerusalem to Rome.—In telling the story of the way of the Church from Jerusalem to Rome, the divisions of the history are marked by the increase of the Word.²¹ The *first section*²² tells how after the ascension and the filling up of the apostolic circle,²³ the Spirit descends to found the Church.²⁴ This is followed by the persecution of Peter and John²⁵ and the other apostles.²⁶ Many believe, and the life of the church at Jerusalem has reached its height. The *second section*²⁷ shows the hindrances in Jerusalem, the weakening of the Church, and the rise of the partly Gentile church in Antioch. Stephen and Philip, forerunners of Paul, are active.²⁸ The former becomes a martyr, but soon Paul is converted.²⁹ The first Gentiles enter with Cornelius under Peter's preaching.³⁰ James is beheaded and the apostles flee from Jerusalem.³¹ The *third section*³² begins the Pauline part, while the former parts deal with the time of Peter's dominance. The gospel enters Europe. Paul undertakes his first missionary trip.³³ The disturbances caused by Jewish Christians necessitate the council at Jerusalem.³⁴ Paul then goes upon his second,³⁵ and later upon his third³⁶ missionary journey. The gospel is now at Athens and Corinth. The *fourth section*³⁷ leads to Rome.

3 1. 24.

4 2. 33.

5 47.

6 3. 16.

7 7. 56.

8 9. 5 ff.

9 10.

10 10. 14.

11 16. 10.

12 14.

13 18. 9.

14 23. 11.

15 5. 19;

8. 26.

16 2. 4.

17 4. 8, 31

6. 10;

8. 18;

11. 12;

15. 28.

18 5. 8, 9;

13. 2;

15. 28.

19 16. 7.

20 Luke 24. 49.

21 6. 7;

12. 24;

19. 20.

22 1. 1—6. 7.

23 1.

24 2.

25 3. 1—5. 16.

26 5. 17—6. 7.

27 6. 8—

12. 25.

28 6. 8—8. 40.

29 9. 1—31.

30 32—

11. 30.

31 12.

32 13. 1—

19. 20.

33 13. 14.

34 15.

35 31—

18. 22.

36 23—

19. 20.

37 21—

20. 30.

After Paul's last trip to Jerusalem,³⁸ his bitter experience and the final rejection of the gospel there,³⁹ his imprisonment in Cæsarea⁴⁰ takes place. Upon an appeal he is finally brought to Rome.⁴¹ Here the Acts end with Paul preaching the kingdom. The gospel, running through the world, has come to the centre of power.

Summary.—Acts, the first church history, shows us that the development of the Church is guided by the ascended Lord. He, full of power, is with His people, and works through His Spirit. The Jews finally reject the kingdom and the Gentiles gain it. The faith of Christ is established in the world. The word of God ever increases through the activity and amid the persecution of Christ's messengers.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Christ is with His Church.
2. The Holy Spirit founds and fills it.
3. The sins of men cannot destroy it.
4. The time of the Gentiles begins.
5. By faith alone they enter.
6. The testimony and suffering of Christ's messengers increase the Church.

ROMANS.

CHAPTER VI.

The Epistles.—A new division of the New Testament, the epistles, begins with this book. Some of the most important literature of ancient times consists in letters, which contain not only personal information, but also biography, history and religion. The age, the author, and the occasion are always reflected in them. The New Testament epistles, showing these features, were written to meet special wants in the churches, and took the place of personal visits. But some of them are general treatises as seen in their opening. While the New Testament letters originated under peculiar circumstances, they embody, as no other letters, eternal truths. Not all the letters of the Apostolic age have been preserved.¹ But the Spirit has caused those which are essential to be kept.

¹ Col. 4. 16.

St. Paul's Epistles.—The most noted letter writer of the New Testament is St. Paul. His letters show general accuracy of diction. But he is not fettered by grammatical rules. Earnest and sincere he avoids rhetorical adornment, and aims at plainness.² But rhetorical effects appear naturally sometimes, as in the long lists of moral qualities. Allegory too is employed,³ and occasionally Paul rises to high eloquence.⁴ The thought is often so powerful, that it strains and breaks the sentence. The richness of knowledge causes the main subject at times to be abandoned, and an incident to be discussed. Long and involved sentences and complex figures are often found. This makes Paul's letters at times hard to understand.⁵

² 1 Cor. 2. 1 ;
² Cor. 11. 6.

³ *e. g.*, Gal. 4.
21 ff.

⁴ *e. g.*, 1 Cor. 13.

⁵ 2 Pet. 3. 16.

A Revelation of Paul's Inner Self.—Everywhere there appears not only a great mind, but an energetic, living conscience, and a warm heart. The epistles of Paul reveal his inner life. They indicate how he, who was once a blasphemer and persecutor,⁶ and a Pharisee seeking righteousness in works,⁷ found the law a school-

⁶ 1 Tim. 1. 13.

⁷ Phil. 3. 9.

master to Christ.⁸ But when it pleased God to reveal His Son in Paul,⁹ and the conflict of soul ensued,¹⁰ then came the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.¹¹ In His faith Paul lived.¹² His grace was sufficient for Paul in his many labors, trials, and persecutions,¹³ and for His glory he hoped.¹⁴

⁸ Gal. 3. 24.⁹ Gal. 1. 16.¹⁰ Rom. 7. 7 ff.¹¹ Phil. 3. 8.¹² Gal. 2. 20.¹³ 2 Cor. 11. 22 ff.¹⁴ 2 Tim. 4. 7 ff.

Romans.—The epistle to the Romans opens the group of letters, called *doctrinal*, which end with Galatians. Romans was written last, probably early in 58 A. D. Paul intended to go to Jerusalem, then to Rome and to Spain.¹⁵ But he was prevented from going to Jerusalem and went to Macedonia.¹⁶ As nothing is said of this in the letter, it must have been written during Paul's stay of three months in Achaia.¹⁷ Doubtless it was sent from Corinth, for Phœbe, deaconess of Cenchrea, seems to have carried it,¹⁸ and Gaius, a Corinthian,¹⁹ sends greetings.²⁰ Tertius wrote the letter for Paul.²¹

¹⁵ Rom. 15.

25-28.

¹⁶ Acts 19. 21.¹⁷ Acts 20. 3.¹⁷ Acts 20. 2.¹⁸ Rom. 16. 1.¹⁹ 1 Cor. 1. 14.²⁰ Rom. 16. 23.²¹ Rom. 16. 22.²² Rom. 1. 10.²³ Rom. 15. 20 ff.² Cor. 10. 16.²⁴ cf. Acts 2. 10.

Paul had long desired to come to Rome,²² but he would not build on another's foundation.²³ At last, however, without breaking his principle, he could write to Rome, where the church seems to have arisen from Christians that gathered there.²⁴ This church was mixed. There were some Jews as is evident from 3. 1, 9; 6. 1, 15; 7. 7, 9 ff.; 11. 1, but the larger part seems to have been Gentiles.²⁵

²⁵ 1. 5 ff., 13;

11. 13;

15. 15, 16.

The Universality of the Gospel.—With wonderful power and calmness the universality of the gospel is unfolded. Romans is the great teaching epistle. Its central doctrine is *justification by faith*. One continued argument, it is well developed with great power. In this "compendium of Christian doctrine" (Melancthon) there is nothing dry. Heart and conscience are mightily appealed to for the gospel is "the power of God." Wrong deductions are warded off with the forcible "God forbid."* When²⁶ the salvation of the justified is portrayed, it sounds like the voice of angels in power and sweetness.

²⁶ 8. 1 ff.

After a full and triumphant greeting,²⁷ which ends with Paul's claim of the right to teach the Romans, the *theme* is announced:²⁸

²⁷ 1. 1-15.²⁸ 16, 17.

* Literally, Be it not so; German, Das sei ferne.

“The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Men's Need of Salvation.—Great is the universal need of justifying salvation.²⁹ The Gentiles are deeply sunk in moral degradation. This is their punishment for the abandonment of God.³⁰ But the Jew is not excused. What he condemns in others, he does.³¹ None of his outward advantages help him, for God looks at the heart.³² Yet the unbelief of the Jew does not destroy the gifts of God.³³ But no man has any excuse for sin. Before God no flesh by law is justified.³⁴

Justification by Faith is the way of Salvation.³⁵ Law failed to save men. But the righteousness of God is manifest to all by His grace. The redeeming death of Christ obtains righteousness. All that believe in Christ receive this righteousness in the remission of sins. God does all for all, and no man can boast.³⁶ This new law of faith does not contradict the old law.³⁷ It establishes that law; for Abraham's faith, counted to him for righteousness, shows that not by circumcision, but by faith was justification secured in the old covenant.³⁸ Where there is justification, there is peace with God, and sure hope of glory.³⁹ Justification is made possible not simply for individuals, but for mankind. As through Adam's disobedience sin and death came to all, so through Christ's obedience life and salvation are given. Christ is the second Adam, the beginner of a new humanity.⁴⁰ Thus where sin reigned, grace can now abound.

New Life.—Where grace abounds there is a new life.⁴¹ Through grace souls do not continue in sin, for by baptism they have died to sin and risen to newness of life with Christ.⁴² Whoever stands in grace is not free to sin, for grace takes men from the slavery of sin and puts them into the service of righteousness.⁴³ To the law which condemns the Christian has *died*, for by Christ's death the law has lost its claim.⁴⁴ But the law itself is holy, just, good; only to sinful man it is the occasion for sin. And he, when changed, may delight in it inwardly, but flesh hinders him from doing what he would.⁴⁵ But he is freed by Christ. There is now no condemnation! There

fore the saved man should walk in the spirit, and not according to the flesh, which brings death.⁴⁶ The duty is upon him to mortify ⁴⁶ 8. 1-11. the deeds of the flesh and, led by God's Spirit, to become an heir of eternal life.⁴⁷ Because of this hope we can bear present ills, for all ⁴⁷ 12-17. things serve for good to them that love God.⁴⁸ What need the ⁴⁸ 18-30. Christian fear! No power can separate him from God's saving love.⁴⁹ ⁴⁹ 31-39.

For Jew and Greek.—To the Jew first, but also to the Greek comes salvation.⁵⁰ Israel, for which God fulfilled His promise, ⁵⁰ 9-11. lost its privilege. This fills Paul with deep sadness.⁵¹ But God's ⁵¹ 1-5. promises are not idle, for they are not all real, spiritual Israel, which ⁵² 6-13. are of Israel.⁵² God is absolutely free, and can choose whom He will.⁵³ ⁵³ 14-21. But He shows His mercy in bearing with the wicked and opening His riches to the elect nation. That they would lose their privileges had been prophesied.⁵⁴ The fault is theirs, for they seek justification by ⁵⁴ 22-27. works and not by faith.⁵⁵ The Jews are without excuse, for they ⁵⁵ 30— will not hear the gospel.⁵⁶ But though they have now lost their ⁵⁶ 10. 13. prerogatives, God will not abandon them. And there is a remnant ⁵⁶ 14-21. that believes.⁵⁷ Through Israel's fall the Gentiles have come in. ⁵⁷ 11. 1-10 Let them not boast, but be warned by Israel's fall.⁵⁸ When the ⁵⁸ 11-24. fulness of the Gentiles has come in, there will be a general conversion of the Jews.⁵⁹ What depths of divine wisdom are evident in ⁵⁹ 25-32. all this.⁶⁰ ⁶⁰ 33-36.

Practical Exhortations.—The practical part⁶¹ contains in- ⁶¹ 12-16. junctions quietly to follow one's calling, to show love and avoid revenge,⁶² to be obedient to government and live soberly,⁶³ and to ⁶² 12. ⁶³ 13. forbear with one another.⁶⁴ After personal remarks⁶⁵ and greet- ⁶⁴ 14— ⁶⁵ 15. 13. ings⁶⁶ this epistle closes with a mighty benediction.⁶⁷ ⁶⁶ 15. 14-33. ⁶⁷ 16. 25-27.

Summary.—Romans is the mightiest manifesto of God's free grace. All men are under sin. But for all there has been established justification in Christ. Faith apprehends justification, and a new life follows. Sin no longer reigns, and there is a glorious outlook of life in the experience of God's strong love. Israel has rejected this grace, but God will finally bring back His ancient people. Let not those who stand boast, but live in love, in obedience to the powers that be, quietly do their work, and show mutual forbearance.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. There is only one way of salvation.
2. All men, being under sin, need it.
3. God's grace in Christ established righteousness.
4. Only faith saves, because it holds Christ the Righteous One.
5. Peace and hope are the fruits of the new life.
6. God's ways are mysterious, but He keeps His promises.
7. Love must rule in all relations.

I CORINTHIANS.

CHAPTER VII.

Corinth was a typical Greek city. When St. Paul wrote to its inhabitants he became a Greek to the Greeks. His language proceeds largely upon classical lines. Its vocabulary is very rich. Out of the 5594 Greek words of the New Testament it employs 963, of which 103 are peculiar to it. But while the form of this letter is more Greek, Paul does not bow to the spirit or influence of Greek wisdom.¹ For ¹ 1. 17 ff. behind it was much sin. In Corinth, a great centre of trade, wealth, fashion and amusement, the people were excitable, fond of debate, changeable, and weak in their morals. All these sins are reflected in the life of the Christian congregation, in its dissensions and disputations in the courts, its excitements in worship, its excesses in the love-feasts, and in its toleration of impurity in the church.

The Church at Corinth.—St. Paul had founded the church at Corinth during his second missionary journey. Rejected by the Jews, he had, together with Silas and Timothy, built up a large congregation.² After staying a year and a half he went to Jerusalem,³ and began his third journey. On this tour, while he was at Ephesus,⁴ he wrote this letter about Easter of probably 57 A. D.⁵ But between his first visit to Corinth and this letter he heard of the immorality at Corinth, and seems to have made a trip there from Ephesus, for he was twice at Corinth before writing 2 Corinthians.*

This visit was without effect, and Paul wrote a lost letter ⁶ against ⁶ 1 Cor. 5. 9. association with immoral persons. This was apparently misunderstood, as forbidding all association with non-Christians. Therefore the Corinthians wrote a letter of inquiry about this,⁷ and also about ⁷ 5. 11. impurity and single life, eating of food offered to idols, and spiritual

* There is no room for such a visit between First and Second Corinthians, on account of the close connection of these letters. (Compare 2 Cor. 2. 1; 12. 14, 20; 13. 2. see also Chapt. VIII.)

⁸ 7. 1; 8. 1; gifts.⁸ To these points Paul replies, and also rebukes the divisions of which he had heard from some of the house of Chloe.⁹ Thus this whole letter is accounted for. It was apparently taken to Corinth by Stephanas and his companions, who had brought the letter of inquiry and had in part given a more favorable report.¹⁰ Timothy and Erastus had been previously sent by way of Macedonia, and would probably arrive after the letter, and to enforce it ¹¹

¹² 1. 11.

¹³ 1. 11.

¹⁴ 16. 17, 18.

¹⁵ Acts 19. 22.
1 Cor. 4. 17.

Its Character.—The needs of the church at Corinth determined the character of this letter. It is therefore taken up with corrections of moral evils, that rose from a wrong heathen spirit of license. Not legalism, but false liberty had to be met. This also explains the most doctrinal part of the letter.¹² And therefore also justification is not the centre as in Romans, though it is presupposed.¹³

Its Contents.—The cross of Christ as the true power in human relations is upheld against false liberty. The gospel of the Crucified,¹⁴ though foolishness to the world,¹⁵ would yet prevail over its wisdom.¹⁶ For the Crucified One is the Lord of glory,¹⁷ Who is the mediator, and our righteousness, sanctification, redemption,¹⁸ and eternal life.¹⁹ He is the true wisdom,²⁰ and is brought to men by His Spirit.²¹ The Spirit unveils the things of God,²² makes men God's holy temple,²³ and thus creates the Church of God upon Christ as foundation,²⁴ and as His body²⁵ fills it with manifold gifts.²⁶ The end is another world, for the fashion of this world passes away.²⁷

Its Plan.—With such a centre, the plan of this letter is determined by the questions asked, and the errors to be corrected. Despite these the Apostle, after the greeting,²⁸ opens with thanksgiving for the utterance and knowledge given the Corinthians,²⁹ and prays that they may come behind in no gift.³⁰

Correction is needed,³¹ because of party spirit, public scandal, contention in courts, and uncleanness.

Reproofs.—1. The spirit of party,³² degrades Christ, elevates men,³³ and forgets the nature of Christian teaching.³⁴ The gospel is no human wisdom, but divine wisdom, hidden from men, and revealed by God's Spirit to the spiritual. Party spirit disregards the nature of Christian teachers.³⁵ All teachers, whoever they are, are

⁸ 7. 1; 8. 1;
⁹ 12. 1.
¹⁰ 1. 11.
¹¹ Acts 19. 22.
1 Cor. 4. 17.
¹² 15.
¹³ 1. 30;
6. 11, 20.
¹⁴ 1. 23.
¹⁵ 27.
¹⁶ 19 ff;
2. 6 ff;
3. 19.
¹⁷ 2. 8.
¹⁸ 8. 6; 1. 30.
¹⁹ 15.
²⁰ 1. 17 ff.
²¹ 2. 4;
6. 11;
12. 3.
²² 2. 11 ff.
²³ 3. 16.
²⁴ 9 ff.
²⁵ 12. 12 ff.
²⁶ 12. 14.
²⁷ 7. 31; 15.
²⁸ 1. 1-3.
²⁹ 4-6.
³⁰ 7-9.
³¹ 10-
6. 20.
³² 1. 10-
4. 21.
³³ 1. 10-17.
³⁴ 17-3. 4.
³⁵ 3. 5-4. 21.

under God. To Him they are responsible. Glorifying in men destroys God's house. Teachers are but gifts of God and servants of Christ.

2. In the public scandal³⁶ the church should have felt shame. It ³⁶ 5. 1-13. must purge out the old leaven. 3. Contention in the courts³⁷ is un- ³⁷ 6. 1-9. worthy of the eternal aim of saints, and speaks ill of their wisdom and morality. 4. Uncleaness³⁸ is an abuse of the body, injures the ³⁸ 10-20. members of Christ, and defiles the temple of the Holy Ghost. Our bodies should also glorify God.

Answers to Questions.—In reply to the questions of the Church Paul writes :

1. Of marriage.³⁹ While under the trials of the time single life ³⁹ 7. is to be preferred, yet all are to be true to existing relations. No one is to break the bond of marriage, but the Christian is not enslaved if a heathen partner deserts. Single life is advised tentatively by St. Paul, because of the instability of earthly things, the shortness of time, and the greater freedom to serve the Lord.

2. Of food offered to idols.⁴⁰ Christians are to act on the know- ⁴⁰ 8 ; 11. ledge that idols are nothing, and that therefore it is not a sin to eat such food. Yet this truth is not grasped by all, and the strong in faith and knowledge may offend the weak. Therefore forbearance, not right, should rule. Because sacrificial meat is connected with idolatry, there is danger that in eating of such meat they may offend weaker brethren. Participation in sacrificial meals is connection with demons, as partaking of the Lord's Supper is communion with His body and Blood. Love will then abstain, and not insist on exercising its freedom.

3. In public worship⁴¹ women are to be veiled for they are to ⁴¹ 11. 2-34 acknowledge their subordinate place according to nature and the custom of the churches. The Lord's Supper must not be abused. It is not the meal for hunger, nor to mark distinctions, but the Lord's table of grace for all. Abuses bring severe condemnation.

4. Spiritual gifts⁴² are to be used as they do good to others. ⁴² 12-14. They are not an end in themselves. Different as they are, they are one in origin and aim, to serve men and edify the body of Christ. The highest gift is love.⁴³ Wonderful as all gifts are the most useful ⁴³ 13. is prophecy.

44 15.

5. Resurrection of the body⁴⁴ is a necessary article of faith. It was in the creed of the Church, testified to by many witnesses. If Christ is risen, the dead must rise. He leads the way, and death will be conquered. Nor is the present body an objection, it shall be raised another body, immortal and glorious. Praise to Christ, who hath gotten the victory!

45 16.

The closing chapter⁴⁵ gives directions, plans of Paul, exhorts and warns against false brethren, and concludes with a benediction.

Summary.—God's wisdom of the cross is the final power making the Church victorious. But she must be one. Every division separates Christ's body. No teachers and no gifts are to be exalted above others. The highest gift and principle is love. It is holy, and the sinful must be put away. It keeps the marriage bond and avoids offence. In worship it is seemly and orderly, and does not disregard the natural distinctions of sex. The great final hope is the resurrection of the body.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God's wisdom of the cross is the true wisdom.
2. No party names are to be in the Church.
3. All men are only servants of Christ.
4. The Church is the one body of Christ.
5. All gifts are to be used to edify others.
6. Love is the highest gift.
7. It does not break natural ties.
8. It bears with the weak.
9. In worship all things are to be done decently and in order.
10. The resurrection of the body is a glorious hope.

II CORINTHIANS.

CHAPTER VIII.

A Second Letter Necessary.—The second letter to the Corinthians is a continuation of the work of the first. The first letter did not at once change all existing conditions. Nor did Timothy seem able to effect what he desired, and he returned to Ephesus. Then Titus was sent to Corinth.¹ Meantime Paul was driven from Ephesus through the stir begun by Demetrius.² Accompanied by Timothy he went to Macedonia, touching at Troas.³ While Paul was in Macedonia, waiting with great longing for the return of Titus, the latter at length came. His report filled the apostle with mingled joy and grief. And thereupon Paul wrote this letter from Macedonia,⁴ about the Fall of 57 A. D. He was then carrying out his plan as outlined in I Corinthians 16. 5-7, which was a change from a former plan. For this the Corinthians blamed Paul, apparently impugning his sincerity.⁵ But he defends himself.⁶ Human plans are not final. Yet at last the troubles are settled, and early in 58 A. D. Paul goes from Macedonia to Corinth.⁷

Its Contents.—While this letter is being written, Paul is still collecting in Macedonia.⁸ The memory of his Ephesian conflict is with him⁹ and he must again write severely to the Corinthians.¹⁰ His deep grief is evident, mainly in the last chapters, while the early chapters are hopeful. The first letter apparently remedied the error about the resurrection of the dead,¹¹ produced better order in worship, and after great misunderstanding effected discipline in the case of the public scandal,¹² so that Paul now pleads for the one punished.¹³ What has been gained moves Paul to great joy, which breaks forth triumphant. But the joy is interwoven with sorrow and grief. Many of the old sins remain, and Paul fears that he must use severity.¹⁴ Some of the social disorders seem still to exist.¹⁵

¹ 2 Cor. 7. 6.

² Acts 19. 23 ff.

³ Acts 20. 1.
² Cor. 1. 8;
2. 12; 7. 5.

⁴ 1. 15, 16;
2. 12;
8. 1; 9. 2.

⁵ 2 Cor. 1. 18.
⁶ 1. 15—2. 2.

⁷ 2. 1 ff.
Acts 20. 2.

⁸ 8, 9.

⁹ 1. 8 ff.
¹⁰ 10 ff.

¹¹ 1 Cor. 15. 12.
35.

¹² 2. 5; 7. 12

¹³ 2. 6.

¹⁴ 10. 2;
12. 20 ff.;
13. 7, 9.

¹⁵ 12. 14;
13. 1 ff.

¹⁶ 1 Cor. 1. 12. There is yet much strife, and the Christ-party¹⁶ is unruly.¹⁷ Those
¹⁷ 10. 1 ff. 7-10; who continue in uncleanness are again called to repentance.¹⁸ And
¹⁸ 13. 3-6. the whole congregation is bidden to return to a still more thorough
¹⁹ 12. 21- obedience.¹⁹ These conditions raise a mighty whirlwind of holy pas-
²⁰ 13. 2. sion in Paul. Indignation and bitter irony break through tender feel-
 ing. Thus Paul in his epistle passes abruptly from point to point.
 The regularity of grammar is rent by the force of feeling.

Paul's Defense Against False Teachers.—Paul's feeling
 is aroused most strongly, however, by enemies. Men who leaned to
 Judaism had come in. They emphasized the law as a means of
 salvation. Thus they adulterated the Word of God.²⁰ The glorious
 gospel of the forgiveness of sins was hidden to them.²¹ They assailed
 Paul, and claimed that he preached himself,²² was beside himself.²³
 They had no confidence in his office because he did not take his living
 from those he taught,²⁴ and they charged that he was worldly, boast-
 ing, harsh, cowardly, tyrannous, and misused money.²⁵ But Paul
 shows that these men were deceitful. They gloried not in the real
 things of the heart;²⁶ pretenders, they claimed the fruits of other's
 labors.²⁷ They were enslavers, plunderers of the community, self-
 exalters, men of violence,²⁸ blinded by the God of this world.²⁹

The Triumph of the Cross.—Against all opposition this
 letter shows the cross of Christ in the suffering and triumph of His
 messengers. Christ, in whom God reconciled the world, not imput-
 ing their trespasses, has with His word given the ambassadors.³⁰
 They are to proclaim how He, though rich, became poor,³¹ and filled
 His messengers with His love, so that they live to Him who died
 and rose for them.³² Thus, though they might boast of many things
 according to the flesh,³³ and of many privileges of revelation,³⁴ they
 will only glory in their trials³⁵ and their weakness in order to
 exalt God's grace.³⁶ In this way the power of justification is applied
 in the work of the ministry.

Victory in Suffering.—The cross which Christ's apostle
 bears brings its pain; but as Christ's cross triumphed, so will it also
 prevail in the sufferings of His own. The final outcome is not uncer-
 tain. Through Christ the office of the New Testament and of the

Spirit will be glorious³⁷ and conquer.³⁸ The sufferings of the apostle are a living sermon, leading men to repentance. In Paul, as he suffers and sacrifices himself, not only the crucified Jesus is present, but the Christ, who is risen and at the right hand of God. The Spirit of the risen Lord not only assures Paul of his salvation, but effects through him and his preaching the regeneration of men. Because this is the purpose of the New Testament ministry, Paul so strongly defends his office. For in the attack upon the office, the purity of truth, which alone giveth salvation, was assailed.

This letter naturally *divides* into *three parts*: c. 1-7, c. 8, 9, c. 10-13. The first contains the answer to Titus' report; the second relates to the collection for Jerusalem; the third is the warning against false apostles, and a defense of Paul himself.

1. The answer to the good tidings of Titus³⁹ after the words of assured comfort under the cross,⁴⁰ reviews the relation of the Apostle toward the Corinthians. He vindicates himself as to his promised visit, and the great offender.⁴¹ He then defends his apostleship.⁴² It is a new ministry of spirit and life, not one of the letter like the old. Despite its suffering, it looks to the hope of resurrection, and is founded on the Redeemer and His work. With the coming of Titus, who was so joyous, a reconciliation between Paul and the congregation as a whole is brought about.

2. The collection for the saints in Jerusalem⁴⁴ is now occupying the apostle. The Macedonians have given a noble example of liberality. Through their love and through Christ's example, who became poor for us, the Corinthians are to be aroused to liberal giving.

3. The mighty defense⁴⁵ of Paul opens with the proof of his authority as apostle in Christ. His work has been measured out to him. And strongly are the opponents answered, when they assailed Paul's loyalty and his foregoing support. He can boast of outward advantages, but his glory is in grace. Let all enemies be warned, for Paul is coming to Corinth.

With greetings and the full apostolic benediction,⁴⁶ Paul concludes a letter, which shows him as a true shepherd, and establishes peace and new Christian life in Corinth.

Summary.—The Christians, particularly Christ's messengers, carry the cross of Christ in suffering for the truth of Jesus. Men despise and oppose them. Yet as Christ, the Crucified, triumphed, so in their persecutions, and through bodily weakness, Christ's own prevail. The ministry of the New Testament is that of spirit and life. It is strong in Christ, whose self-denial and poverty for us should lead us to help His poor saints.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Christ's cross must be borne by His own.
2. The messengers of Jesus suffer with Him.
3. The triumph of Christ is the victory of His people.
4. The strength of the New Testament ministry is the gospel.
5. Christ became poor to enrich us, and we should care for His poor.

GALATIANS.

CHAPTER IX.

To Whom Addressed.—This letter is supposed by many to have been sent to the Galatian people, who were of Celtic stock, and settled in Asia Minor in the third century before Christ. Their principal cities were Ancyra, Pessinus, and Tavium. But it is more than probable that St. Paul did not address the Galatians in this narrow sense, but the inhabitants of the Roman province Galatia. In this wider meaning Galatia included Pisidia, Lycaonia, and the part of Phrygia south of Galatia. St. Luke, indeed, does refer to "Galatian territory"¹ in the narrow sense, but Paul uses only the Roman names of provinces.* The Galatian churches then to which he wrote, were those of Antioch, Iconium, Derbe and Lystra, which were founded on the first missionary journey.² To these it was more natural that Jewish agitators would come than to North Galatia, for they had synagogues,³ and were along lines of travel. Paul says,⁴ that he contended for the Galatian churches at the council of Jerusalem. But at that time the churches of North Galatia were not yet founded. Barnabas, who is mentioned 2. 1, 9, 13, accompanied Paul in the first trip to the South Galatian cities, and Silas was with him on the second tour.⁵ These men are then included when Paul says, "we preached."⁶ By a sickness, possibly fever, Paul was moved⁷ to go to the cities southward from Antioch, instead of north or west.⁸ In the summer of 52 A. D., Paul visited their churches the second time, and then went to North Galatia.⁹ Soon the southern churches were disturbed. An embassy came to Paul, when the sufferings he

¹ Acts 16, 6;
18, 23.

² Acts 14.

³ Acts 13. 14;
14. 1.
⁴ 2. 5.

⁵ Acts 15. 40 ff.;
cp. Gal. 1. 8.

⁶ 1. 8.
⁷ 4. 13.
⁸ cp. Acts 13.
14.

⁹ Acts 16. 1.

* *e. g.*, Achaia Rom. 15. 26; 1 Cor. 16. 15; 2 Cor. 1. 1; 9. 2; Macedonia, Rom. 15. 26; 1 Cor. 16. 5; 2 Cor. 1. 16; 2. 13; Judea, Rom. 15. 31; 2 Cor. 1. 16; Gal. 1. 22. In Asia Minor Paul only names Asia (1 Cor. 16. 19; 2 Cor. 1. 8; 2 Tim. 1. 15), and Galatia (1 Cor. 16. 1; Gal. 1. 2). He never designates Asian provinces by national names.

¹⁰ Gal. 6. 17;
 ep. 1 Thess.
 2. 2.

had endured at Philippi were still in his mind.¹⁰ He was at Corinth, and from there early in the spring of 53 A.D., before Silas and Timothy joined him, he wrote this *his first letter*, which has been preserved to us.

Its Character.—This epistle is most characteristic of St. Paul. The style is forcible, the arguments are condensed with wonderful power, and the transitions are sudden. Words of great directness are used. At times Paul argues as a Jew, but the bonds of Judaism are broken.

Reproofs.—The tone of this letter is very similar to that of II Corinthians. It changes rapidly from severity to tenderness. Paul is most tender toward the congregations of Galatia. He remembers that he founded them¹¹ and gave them the gospel. With sorrow he recalls his work among them,¹² and with sadness is he filled in view of the glad reception first accorded him.¹³ Like a mother he felt toward them.¹⁴ But now by false teachers they are bewitched¹⁵ and hindered in their growth.¹⁶ Easily excited and changeable,¹⁷ they are ready to turn from the only gospel of Christ.¹⁸ In Paul, whom they once so highly regarded,¹⁹ they have lost confidence. Therefore to reestablish them in the truth, he writes with his own hand.²⁰

Justification by Faith Alone, Defended.—There is a great similarity between this letter and Romans.* The doctrine of justification there developed is here defended. Here are met the false teachers from Jerusalem, the Judaizers, whom Paul also opposes in II Corinthians. They demand the keeping of the law.²¹ They have introduced Jewish festivals²² and they contemplated introducing more Old Testament law.²³ With an appearance of liberality,²⁴ they are seeking the favor of the Galatians,²⁵ who are Gentiles.²⁶ But they are attempting to put the Galatians under the yoke of circumcision.²⁷ Christian freedom and the power of the gospel to save without law are endangered.

St. Paul therefore sends forth at once this great defense of the

**c. g.*, Gal. 3. 6 and Rom. 4. 3; Gal. 3. 7 and Rom. 4. 10, 11; Gal. 3. 8 and Rom. 4. 17; Gal. 3. 9 and Rom. 4. 23; Gal. 3. 10 and Rom. 4. 15; Gal. 3. 11 and Rom. 3. 21; Gal. 3. 12 and Rom. 4. 4, 5; Gal. 3. 15 ff. and Rom. 4. 13 ff.; Gal. 3. 22 and Rom. 11. 32, etc.

¹¹ 1. 8.

¹² 4. 1 ff.

¹³ 13 ff.

¹⁴ 19.

¹⁵ 3. 1.

¹⁶ 5. 7.

¹⁷ 1. 7; 5. 10.

¹⁸ 1. 6 ff.;

¹⁹ 3. 3.

²⁰ 4. 12 ff.

²¹ 6. 11;

cp. Rom. 16.

²²

²³ 4. 29;

²⁴ 5. 13;

²⁵ 6. 12 ff.

²⁶ 4. 9.

²⁷ 21.

²⁸ 6. 13.

²⁹ 4. 17.

³⁰ 2. 2, 5, 8;

³¹ 4. 8; 5. 2;

³² 6. 12.

³³ 5. 2 ff.;

³⁴ 6. 12.

gospel of free grace as the only saving truth.²⁸ Not by law and ²⁸ 1. 8. works, but by faith is man saved. But he who is saved by faith is free from the law. To return to the law is to abandon Christ. The freedom from the law and its curse, is freedom from sin and the flesh. The believer is a child of the Spirit. By the Spirit he fulfills the law in love.²⁹ The central facts of justification are strongly urged. ²⁹ 5. 14. There is no need of development as in Romans: the great essential truth must be upheld. This makes Galatians the powerful epistle of defense against all legalism. The true freedom of a Christian by faith is established. Therefore Galatians became the fighting epistle of the Reformation.

How Divided.—It is divided into three equal parts. *The first* ³⁰ defends Paul's authority and apostolic office. After the greet- ³⁰ 1, 2. ing ³¹ Paul claims that only the gospel he brought is the divine ³¹ 1. 1-5. truth.³² He received it from no man, but from Christ Himself.³³ ³² 6-10. ³³ 11-16. Therefore Paul did not go to the other apostles for confirmation.³⁴ ³⁴ 17-24. They acknowledged him at Jerusalem as co-ordinate apostle to the Gentiles.³⁵ Peter for a time denied the full result of justifying faith, ³⁵ 2. 1-10. but had to suffer open rebuke from Paul.³⁶ ³⁶ 11-21.

The second part ³⁷ unfolds the saving truth of justification by ³⁷ 3, 4. faith alone, and, therefore, freedom from the law. The Galatians are to remember that their spiritual life came not by law, but through the Holy Spirit in faith. Nor was this a new experience. Abraham ³⁸ 3. 1-14. believed and was justified.³⁸ There are two covenants in the Old Testament: that of promise to Abraham, that of law with Moses. The second is later and does not abrogate the first.³⁹ It does not ³⁹ 15-18. agree fully with God's unity, and has only come in between to develop the nature of sin, and to lead the soul to accept Christ.⁴⁰ ⁴⁰ 19-23. But with the fulfillment the preparation closes. How glorious is the state of the children, free from the beggarly elements of the world! ⁴¹ 4. 1-7. It is foolish to return to these.⁴² Paul entreats the Galatians for the ⁴² 8-11. love they bear him, not to be led away by the false teachers, who seek themselves.⁴³ The law itself by the allegory contained in the ⁴³ 12-20. opposition of Isaac and Ishmael, Sarah and Hagar, shows that the freedom of faith is to be preferred to the law.⁴⁴ ⁴⁴ 21-31.

45 5, 6.

46 5. 1-12.

47 13-26.

48 6. 1-6.

49 7-10.

50 11-18.

*The third part*⁴⁵ contains exhortations. It lays emphasis upon keeping the freedom from the law against all errorists.⁴⁶ The believers should in freedom walk in the Spirit, and not according to the flesh.⁴⁷ In this life of the Spirit the chief thing is brotherly love.⁴⁸ The new spiritual life also regards God's just retribution.⁴⁹ After severe condemnation of the false teachers, Paul shows that he is living under the cross of Christ. And Christ, not circumcision, is the only way of peace and salvation.⁵⁰

Summary.—The office of the true apostle and of every true teacher, must be defended for Christ's and the truth's sake. Truth knows of only one way of salvation, justification by faith. This grants holy freedom from all bondage of law. But the law is kept by faith, which worketh through love. And freedom is the life in the Holy Spirit, full of glorious fruits, which stand before God's judgment.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The apostles are direct witnesses of Christ.
2. They are all equal and their position depends on their fidelity to truth.
3. Only the faith which embraces Christ justifies.
4. Faith works by love. It is never without love, but love does not justify.
5. Faith makes free, so that man walks in the Spirit.
6. This new life is approved by God.

EPHESIANS.

CHAPTER X.

A new series of St. Paul's letters begins with Ephesians, *the letters of the captivity*. Beside Ephesians these embrace Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. All bear clear evidence of having been written in imprisonment.*

To Whom Addressed.—This letter to the Ephesians has the words “at Ephesus” omitted by some good ancient manuscripts. It has been argued, from this fact, combined with the general character of this epistle, which has no greetings, that it was a circular letter. The title would, in that case, have been inserted later. Some have supposed that this letter was that sent to the Laodiceans.¹ But many ¹ Col. 4. 16. old manuscripts do contain the words “at Ephesus.” Ephesus was the centre of the cities to which the supposed circular letter was addressed. Therefore even if a circular letter was sent, it would first go to Ephesus. Tychicus² is advised to give a personal account of ² 6. 21. Paul in a manner which seems to point to a special place. The absence of greetings proves nothing, for II Corinthians and Galatians contain no greetings. It is possible that the letter was sent to Ephesus and the other cities, as II Corinthians was addressed to the church of God at Corinth, “with all the saints which are in all Achaia.” This supposition is supported by such passages as 1. 5; 2. 2; 3. 4, which sound special, and yet have a general application.

Paul and the Ephesians.—Ephesus was a metropolis for art and trade. It was the place of the great temple of Diana with its worship, and also gathered into it many Asiatic superstitions.³ A few ³ Acts 19. 13, 19. of the disciples of John the Baptist had settled there, who were not yet Christians, but no longer Jews.⁴ On his second journey Paul ⁴ Acts 19. 1 ff.

* Eph. 3. 1; Phil. 1. 7, 12-17; 2. 23; 4. 10 ff.; Col. 4. 3, 10, 18; Philem. 1, 9, 10, 13, 22, 23.

was "forbidden by the Holy Ghost" to preach in Ephesus and the province of Asia⁵ containing it. Upon his return he spoke in the Jewish synagogue.⁶ Paul's third journey was really⁷ an evangelization of Ephesus and its vicinity. For three years he and his co-workers labored there.⁸ Between the Christians at Ephesus and Paul a most tender friendship arose.⁹ God's word "grew mightily and prevailed."¹⁰ Even the magicians brought and burnt their books.¹¹ The Roman power defended Paul against the riot of Demetrius.¹² And yet it must have been then when he "fought with beasts at Ephesus,"¹³ for men were as beasts in the wild riot. But though the enemies did not prevail, yet through this uprising Paul was compelled soon to leave Ephesus. When he journeyed to Jerusalem he took a sad, affectionate leave of the elders of Ephesus at Miletus.¹⁴ The next communication was this letter. It was sent at the same time as Colossians and Philemon, and Tychicus bore it.¹⁵ It could not have been sent from Cæsarea, because there Paul did not have the freedom indicated in these letters, nor was he surrounded by the helpers named in them: Timothy, Luke, Aristarchus, Epaphras, Demas, Mark. All elements point to Rome. It was probably written from there in the second year of Paul's captivity, about 62 A. D.

The Character of this Epistle.—Paul has passed here and in Colossians to another centre of truth. Christ, His person and work are mainly treated. Justification by faith is not the prominent subject, yet in the more personal letter to the Philippians it does occur.* New dangers had arisen. The Christian truth had to be developed along further lines. This is done in Ephesians systematically. It is related to Colossians as Romans is to Galatians. Its style is strong and moves along with a rhythm like a hymn. Wonderfully deep thoughts are unfolded in mighty periods of great power. The rich truth overflows the bounds of grammatical structure.

Its Purpose.—But while Christ's person and work stand forth, the special purpose is to show Christ as the Head of the Church. His glory, as the power of God, is seen in the Church, which is His body. To prepare this Church was God's eternal purpose. For this He chose the Jews and eternally planned salvation and redemption in

* But also Eph. 2. 8 ff.

Christ. Now he is uniting Jews and Gentiles in this one, universal, spiritual body. This is His building of the Church by the apostles and in the activity of individuals. The Church is exalted. Into it the fulness of Christ is being poured.

Contents.—Ephesians is divided into two parts; 1. doctrinal; ¹⁶ ¹⁶ 1-3.
2. practical.¹⁷ ¹⁷ 4-6.

I. After a greeting¹⁸ the Apostle thanks God for the blessings ¹⁸ 1. 1, 2. given the Church.¹⁹ These are spiritual, predestined by the Father, ¹⁹ 3-14. who chose men “to the praise of the glory of His grace.” They are communicated through “The Beloved” (the Son), who brings redemption, forgiveness, knowledge of God’s plan, and inheritance for the saints, “to the praise of His glory.” They are sealed to men by the Spirit of promise, who shall complete all “unto the praise of His glory.” This spiritual state is acknowledged, and yet fuller knowledge of the power of God,²⁰ is prayed for. ²⁰ 19-15.

The power of God is manifest²¹ (1) in Christ,²² who is granted ²¹ 20—
resurrection, ascension, supremacy over the world, headship over the ²² 2. 22.
Church; (2) in all individuals,²³ as they are raised from spiritual ²³ 1. 20-23.
death, ascend to spiritual heights, and show God’s grace in their ²³ 2. 1-10.
good works; (3) in all mankind,²⁴ as both Jews and Gentiles are ²⁴ 11-22.
made one family, one temple, built on the foundation of prophets
and apostles with Christ as corner-stone.

The influence of God’s power²⁵ enables Paul to preach this great ²⁵ 3.
truth of a universal Church, showing God’s manifold wisdom. It
should strengthen the Ephesians not to faint as they hear of Paul’s
sufferings, but to be strong in Christ, through love and knowledge of
their gifts, that the fulness of divine life may be increasingly
exhibited through them to the final glory of God’s power.

II. The whole Church is to keep unity²⁶ but to recognize its ²⁶ 4. 1-6.
members’ individuals gifts.²⁷ Old Gentile sins are to be avoided, ²⁷ 7-16.
and all virtues cultivated that make for unity.²⁸ All classes and ²⁸ 17—
estates are to show the new life of unity and subjection to the Head: ²⁸ 5. 14.
wives and husbands,²⁹ parents and children,³⁰ masters and servants.³¹ ²⁹ 21-33.
All are to fight the good fight of faith.³² Tychicus is then com- ³⁰ 6. 1-4.
mended and divine grace implored.³³ ³¹ 5-9.
³² 10-20.
³³ 21-24.

Summary.—Ephesians is a mighty hymn of praise for God's power in Christ. In Him God chose man, through Him God redeemed man and formed a universal Church. This is the body of the eternal Christ, filled by Him with the fulness of His resurrection, ascension and dominion. Such gift is to move all Christians to show the new life in holy relations of true unity in all positions.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. All depends upon God's saving power.
2. He chose men eternally in Christ.
3. Jesus is the Head of the Church.
4. The resurrection, ascension and rule of the Head is given the members of His body.
5. These gifts are present now in spiritual life.
6. They shall abound to the fulness of Christ.
7. The daily life in the home, in work, should show the power of holy harmony.
8. This harmony comes from the spiritual unity of the Church.

PHILIPPIANS.

CHAPTER XI.

St. Paul and the Church at Philippi.—Paul came to the city of Philippi on his second missionary journey. There he began his work in Europe. Quietly his labors opened by the river-side, where Lydia was won through the gentle influence of the gospel. But a conflict soon arose. Avarice caused persecution, scourging, imprisonment. Though a whole family was gained by Paul in his bonds, yet he was compelled to leave.¹ But Timothy was apparently left in Philippi.² The believers in this place were not spared trials,³ but the church grew. It sent money to Paul for his support, when he was at Thessalonica, and continued doing so.⁴ When Paul, six years later, came again to Macedonia, he undoubtedly visited the Philippians. Perhaps he also sent them a letter previously.⁵ When they heard that he was in imprisonment in Rome, Epaphras* was sent with a gift. Epaphras became sick,⁶ and must have remained some time in Rome. When Paul then could send him back with this letter, it must have been toward the end of the first captivity, about 63 A. D. Paul was now in contact with “those of Cæsar’s household,”⁷ and his case was evidently being tried, for he says that his bonds became known to the pretorian court.⁸ † Others are preaching, some to assist Paul, some to add affliction to him.⁹ He is uncertain what the end shall be, and death seems imminent.¹⁰ Yet in this state of conflict Paul by faith sees freedom and continuance of human work before him, much as he might desire to be with Christ.¹¹

Character of the Epistle.—Excepting Philemon this is the most personal of all the letters of Paul. It is not as forceful and majestic in argument as the others. There is an ease of form and diction, proper in a letter, but there is also eloquence of heart, delicate feeling and

* This is the shorter form for Epaphroditus.

† The English Auth. Ver. wrongly translates “palace.”

¹ Acts 16. 16 ff.

² 1. 1;

³ 2. 19 ff.

⁴ 1. 28 ff.

⁴ 4. 15 ff.

⁵ 3. 1.

⁶ 2. 30.

⁷ 1. 13, 16;
4. 22.

⁸ 1. 13.

⁹ 1. 15 ff.

¹⁰ 20 ff.;
2. 17.

¹¹ 1. 21 ff.; 25;
2. 24.

expression, nowhere surpassed. When high subjects are approached there is great dignity and depth. Philippians reflects Paul's personal character, and his fine spiritual insight. He is seen in "his large sympathy, his womanly tenderness, his delicate courtesy, his frank independence, his entire devotion to the Master's cause." (Lightfoot.)

Great is the bond of love between him and the Philippians. His letter is the pastoral letter of personal love. Full of assurance Paul not only tells of his work and progress, but reveals the inmost yearnings of his spirit to those whose tender, helpful sympathy has so deeply touched him. He has them in heart and longs for them.¹² They are his joy and crown.¹³ With the utmost confidence of friendship does he unburden himself.¹⁴ For them he is ready to be offered up, and pour out himself as a sacrifice.¹⁵ Readily, therefore, he parts with Timothy and Epaphras, though they might be helpful to him, for the sake of his dear Philippians.¹⁶

They pray for him,¹⁷ and participate in his joys, his work and his sorrows.¹⁸ Therefore are they permitted to send him gifts; yet, these he desired not, but "fruit, that might abound to their account."¹⁹

Its Exhortations.—No great sins need correction. Yet Paul lovingly indicates that the Philippians need more knowledge,²⁰ greater patience in conflicts,²¹ more harmony and humility.²² Warnings are given against the dissensions of Euodia and Syntyche.²³ There seems to have been a danger from wrong assertion of these women. But greater is the danger of the false Judaizing teachers,²⁴ against whom, out of love to the Philippians, Paul is very severe. The same spirit is shown as toward the Galatians in exalting justification. Paul's regard for the Philippians is, however, more tender, as he defends them against the enemies that appeared in II Corinthians and Galatians. Another danger is heathen indulgence²⁵ of the body. In warding off this, Paul looks to the glorious future of the body, and an echo of I Cor. 15, is heard.

Doctrines Exhibited.—There is also in this personal and distinctively New Testament epistle,* a wonderful fulness of mighty

* There is no direct Old Testament quotation; it is seen only indirectly in 2. 10, 11; 4. 18.

¹² 1. 7, 8.

¹³ 4. 1.

¹⁴ 1. 18 ff.

¹⁵ 2. 17.

¹⁶ 2. 19 ff., 25.

¹⁷ 1. 19.

¹⁸ 1. 26.
² 12 ff.;
 18 ff.

¹⁹ 4. 17.

²⁰ 1. 9 ff.

²¹ 1. 28.
²² 1. 27;
 2. 2 ff.

²³ 4. 2.

²⁴ 3. 3 ff.

²⁵ 3. 18 ff.

truth interwoven with the stream of personal narrative. Jesus is shown, God and man, pre-existent, incarnate, suffering, risen, exalted, coming again,²⁶ and giving all comfort by His Spirit.²⁷ Through Christ righteousness is to be apprehended by faith.²⁸ Upon such truth joy is proclaimed.²⁹ Unity,³⁰ humility, thankfulness and every virtue is praised.³¹

Contents.—The flow of thought seems to be this: After the opening greeting,³² the apostle offers up an intense prayer of thanksgiving³³ for the Philippians' fellowship in the gospel. He tells the congregation of his work, his personal condition, his fears and hopes.³⁴ Mightily he exhorts to unity and humility.³⁵ Christ is painted as the great example of self-denying humility. He, though in the form of God, became a servant.³⁶ Him are the believers bidden to follow.³⁷ Paul then returns to personal matters, relates how he hopes for a release, that he will send Timothy and Epaphras, who was ill, and shall soon return.³⁸ It seems as though then the apostle was about to close.³⁹ But remembering the dangers, he enters upon

A Warning Against Errors.⁴⁰—First are the Judaizers, called dogs, evil workers, mutilators of the flesh. True circumcision is contrasted with false. The real power is faith.⁴¹ But the life in grace by faith must not be perverted to wrong freedom. Therefore, secondly, wrong liberty is opposed. Grace does not mean continuance in sin. The doctrine of faith and Paul's own example do not support this. There is an advance in Christian life, a reaching after the goal, a looking to the heavenly citizenship, and not worldly indulgence.⁴²

After this digression Paul once more warns against divisions, and names the two great offenders.⁴³ Again Paul apparently is about to close with exhortations to holy joy, to freedom from care, to every virtue.⁴⁴ But something is still unsaid. Paul has not yet fully thanked for the gift sent by Epaphras, though it was alluded to. With manly independence and fine courtesy the gift is acknowledged; and any misgivings, that the Philippians may have had, allayed. Paul's own circumstances and feelings are laid open, and then blessing

45 4. 10-20.

invoked upon the thoughtful love of the Philippians.⁴⁵ Greetings are sent from all to all, and the letter concludes with the benediction.⁴⁶

46 21-23.

Summary.—Philippians shows the tender relations of a true shepherd to his flock ; how he cares, prays, spends himself for them, fights against their enemies, warns against sins, exhorts to greater virtue. And all is impelled by the mightiest example, Christ. Such love of the shepherd is answered by a considerate, loving flock. It is kept from the bondage of law, and the enticements of the flesh. The life of grace presses on toward the prize of the mark of its high calling.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. How great a power is the love of a true teacher.
2. Such love is self-sacrificing.
3. It must warn earnestly against errors.
4. It points to Christ's mind and spirit.
5. The Church should lovingly support its teachers.
6. It should keep free from bondage and license.
7. It should seek unity, humility, and every virtue.
8. Out of faith grows progressing sanctification.

COLOSSIANS.

CHAPTER XII.

St. Paul and the Colossians.—Colossæ in Phrygia, formerly most important, was declining in St. Paul's day. Laodicea and Hierapolis near it were larger. All three were situated in the valley of the Lycus, whose lime deposits were making the valley sterile. But Christianity found an asylum in this quiet valley. Its churches were not founded by Paul, who had only once passed through this region, and never returned to it.¹ They were begun by Epaphras, who also exercised supervision over them.² Paul knew only Epaphras, Philemon, and a few others.³ But he writes to Colossæ and Laodicea ⁴ in this letter, because Epaphras is, as it were, his substitute.⁵ Paul's sufferings and work are also to bless the unknown Colossians.⁶ For them as for all Christians he prays,⁷ and with Epaphras is concerned about their salvation.⁸ They too have a spiritual love for him.⁹ Therefore he feels impelled to "fulfill the word of God" ¹⁰ among them, in giving them fuller instruction in pursuance of his labor.¹¹ For he is not only a minister to bring the gospel, a missionary,¹² but also a minister of the Church¹³ to teach all wisdom. An occasion is given him as now Tychicus and Onesimus return to Colossæ. Tychicus bears this letter,¹⁴ together with that to Philemon and to the Ephesians.¹⁵ From Colossians the time of these letters can be determined as the second year of Paul's captivity, 62 A. D.*

¹ 2. 1.
² 1. 6, 7;
³ 4. 12, 13.
⁴ 1. 4, 8, 9;
⁵ 2. 5; 4. 15 ff
⁶ 4. 16.
⁷ 1. 7.
⁸ 1. 24.
⁹ 1. 3-9.
¹⁰ 2. 1; 4. 12.
¹¹ 1. 8.
¹² 1. 25.
¹³ 1. 29.
¹⁴ 1. 23.
¹⁵ 1. 24, 25.
¹⁶ 4. 8.
¹⁷ cp. Eph. 6. 21, 22.

Character of this Epistle.—Colossians, sent with Ephesians, resembles it in thought and expression.† But its style is not marked by the latter's full, passionate flow of affection. The language is brief and condensed. Phrases are connected not by particles. but

* See Ephesians.

† Compare Col. 1. 13, 22; 2. 12, 14 and Eph. 2; Col. 1. 25, 28 and Eph. 3. 1 ff.; Col. 2. 2, 3 and Eph. 3. 18, 19; Col. 2. 9, 10 and Eph. 3. 19; 4. 13; Col. 3. 12, 13 and Eph. 4. 2; Col. 3. 14 and Eph. 4. 3, 16; Col. 3. 18, 21 and Eph. 5. 21 ff.; 6. 1.

relative pronouns and participles join on thoughts. There is a great compactness, and sentences are filled with overflowing power of truth. Withal there is a certain roughness.

Its Objects.—These peculiarities are due not simply to the fact, that Paul did not know the Colossians. His forceful language is directed against some dangerous error. The existence of this mainly moves him also to further instruction. Men were arising who sought to lower the divine dignity of Christ, and who substituted human wisdom. By a philosophy “after the tradition of men and the rudiments of the world”¹⁶ they denied His eternity,¹⁷ His headship of the Church,¹⁸ and that in Him dwelt “the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”¹⁹ These errorists were also very severe to the body, followed human commandments of “Touch not, Taste not, Handle not” in perishing things.²⁰ With a mock humility they held to worship of angels, and brooded on wonders seen in visions.²¹ In all this they were leading away men from Christ, the sole and sufficient Saviour, “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.”²² Their wisdom was a mixture of Jewish, human traditions, and of heathen wisdom.

The Central Truth.—To uphold the truth Paul therefore puts in the centre Christ, the divine image of God, the fulness of the Godhead, the Mediator of creation and redemption, the Head of the Church. Christ’s person and work are exalted. The “mystery of God” becomes manifest in Him, in “whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”²³ As the divine fulness,²⁴ He has power in the Universe.²⁵ On the cross He showed the weakness of all other powers and principalities by triumphing over them.²⁶ By His death men are freed from the corruption of sin. The new life, which consists not in laws, is given by baptism into Him.²⁷

Its Contents.—With this as a centre the thought of this epistle is unfolded thus:

After the greeting²⁸ Paul enters upon an extended and wonderful prayer of thanksgiving.²⁹ The Colossians, as Epaphras told him, have faith, love, hope, and knowledge of the truth of the gospel.³⁰ But Paul prays that they may have greater knowledge in wisdom and

¹⁶ 2. 8.¹⁷ 1. 17.¹⁸ 1. 18.¹⁹ 2. 9; 1. 19.²⁰ 2. 20 ff.²¹ 2. 18.²² 1. 15.²³ 2. 2, 3.²⁴ 1. 19; 2. 9.²⁵ 1. 15 ff.²⁶ 2. 15.²⁷ 2. 12.²⁸ 1. 1, 2.²⁹ 3-23.³⁰ 3-8.

spiritual understanding, and that they may walk worthily of the Lord, as they give thanks to the Father, who hath delivered them from darkness and placed them into the kingdom of the Son.³¹ In Him, the very image of God, the beginning and aim of creation and the power that holds it together, is redemption and forgiveness of sins.³² For He, the Head of the Church, the Risen One, the Fulness of God, hath effected an all-embracing reconciliation. The Colossians experienced its power and would be led to full holiness if they continued in faith and kept to the world-wide gospel, which Paul announced.³³

Paul relates how by his sufferings and work he is carrying out God's plan, and bringing human hearts under the power and to the ever greater riches of the mystery of God, now revealed in the gospel.³⁴ Therefore, though he has not seen the Colossians, he takes deep interest in them and prays for them.³⁵ No beguiler should lead them from the steadfastness in Christ.³⁶

Admonitions.—They are to avoid error by walking in Christ, in whom they are to be built up.³⁷ In Him, the divine fulness, is their redemption. By baptism they had received the fruit of His death and resurrection. Circumcision foreshadowed baptism. With Christ as Mediator, they should not be led to wrong abstinence, angel-worship, affected humility, but should receive all nourishment from Him, the Head.³⁸ As He died and rose again, they are to be dead to the "rudiments" (commandments, traditions) of the world and live in God.³⁹ In this life appetites and passions are brought to death, evil habits are laid aside,⁴⁰ and new graces, growing out of love, rule by the power of the word of Christ.⁴¹ Not only individuals, but the whole family is to experience this new life, husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants.⁴² All Christians are to persevere in prayer and be discrete toward the heathen.⁴³

Other messages Tychicus is to bear and Onesimus, who is commended.⁴⁴ After greetings to some friends,⁴⁵ Paul sends a salutation with his own hand and ends with a short benediction.⁴⁶

Summary.—Colossians unfolds the depth of wisdom and power

in Christ. He, as the eternal Son, begins and is the aim of creation, which He sustains. In redemption all proceeds from Him. He is the only Mediator, and of His divine fulness He gives to the Church, which is His body. All sin is conquered by His death. All strength of new life is in His resurrection. Their power is applied by baptism. Therefore no laws obtain but only the outworking of His life. His life in us produces every grace and changes hearts and homes.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Jesus is the eternal image of God.
2. In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead.
3. All wisdom and power are hid in Him.
4. He is the central power of the created world and in redemption.
5. All things are reconciled by Him.
6. By baptism His redemptive power comes to men.
7. His life renews every relation.

I AND II THESSALONIANS.

CHAPTER XIII.

I THESSALONIANS.

Thessalonica in the time of Paul was, what it still is, a flourishing centre of trade. Its inhabitants were Greeks, Roman settlers, and many Jews. To it Paul came on his second missionary journey, together with Silas, after leaving Philippi.¹ Timothy probably followed later, but only joined Paul at Berea.² Hither Paul and Silas had fled because the Jews, envious that many Greeks and some of the foremost women believed, had raised a riot at Thessalonica.³ This the Jews repeated at Berea.⁴ The congregation at Thessalonica continued to suffer persecution from the Jews.⁵ This rendered Paul anxious and twice he planned to return⁶ and comfort the young church in its trials, but Satan hindered him. Therefore Timothy was sent from Athens,⁷ whither Paul had gone with his companions from Berea. Soon Timothy returned and joined Paul and Silas in Corinth.⁸ He brought a favorable report⁹ of the growth of the church, and its perseverance in suffering. Then, after this short time,¹⁰ Paul wrote, for there were also sins to be warned against.¹¹ Yet, since he left Thessalonica, perhaps three-quarters of a year had elapsed, for the faith of the Thessalonians had become known in Achaia and Macedonia.¹² His letter, therefore, was probably sent in spring 53 A. D., shortly after Galatians.

The Purpose of this Epistle.—The chief purpose of this letter was to congratulate the Thessalonians *upon their faith* and to encourage them to remain steadfast. But in rebuking sin,¹³ an error had to be met which arose about Christ's coming. That Jesus would come again to judgment had always been an element of apostolic teaching. The earnestness of faith leaped across the barriers of time. But the Thessalonians in their suffering expected an almost immediate return of Christ. They were troubled about those who had died. Would these also enter into the joy of Christ?¹⁴ To allay

¹ Act 16. 19;
17. 1.

² 1 Thess. 2. 2.
³ Acts 17. 10,
14.

⁴ Acts 17. 4, 5.

⁵ Acts 17. 13.

⁶ Acts 17. 5 ff.
⁷ 1 Thess. 1. 6;
2. 15.

⁸ 1 Thess. 2. 18.

⁹ 1 Thess. 3.
1 ff.

¹⁰ Acts 18. 1.

¹¹ 1 Thess. 3. 6.

¹² 1 Thess. 2. 11.

¹³ 1 Thess. 4.
3 ff.

¹⁴ 1. 7, 8; 4. 16.

¹⁵ 4. 1 ff.

¹⁶ 4. 13 ff.

15 2. 1 ff.

this error, Paul must teach them that the sleeping departed would precede the living in the return of Christ. He seems also to have been compelled to defend himself against charges of deceit and covetousness.¹⁵ Perhaps, seeing that the Philippians sent money to Paul,* the husbands or friends of the prominent women had raised this accusation.

¹⁶ 1. 1, 10;
2. 15, 19;
4. 14 ff.;
5. 9, 10, 23.
¹⁷ 5. 12 ff.;
cp. Acts 14,
23.

In this early and practical letter we find, as in Galatians, that Paul's earliest preaching contains all that his later letters give. He only unfolded the truth over against error. The full outlines were revealed to him when he began his work. Thus in this letter Jesus is seen as Lord, co-joined with the Father, prayed to, redeeming, risen, giving life to men, coming to judgment.¹⁶ These truths imply the fullest statements of Colossians. Similarly we find that at this early time there were already elders placed over the churches.¹⁷

¹⁸ 1-3.
¹⁹ 4, 5.
²⁰ 1. 1.

Contents.—*Two parts* are distinguishable in this letter: First, a personal, historical part; ¹⁸ second, an ethical and doctrinal part. ¹⁹

21 2-10.

First—After the greeting ²⁰ Paul tells the Thessalonians how he ever remembers them in prayer, and exhorts them to faith, love and hope. Joy fills his heart that they have received the gospel, become followers of God and him, and an example to the churches.²¹ But they are to recall that he came sincerely to help them. Love and fatherly care, and not covetousness led him. He thanks God that they received “the word of the message” as God’s word. They should

22 2. 1-16.

then stand firm in the persecution of the Jews.²² Ever since his departure had he sought to return. But since he could not, Timothy was sent, whose report filled him with thanksgiving, renewed his longing for them and made his intercession the more earnest.²³

23 17-3. 13.

Second—But, as Timothy tells, there are some sins. The believers should walk before God, as Paul commanded them. They ought to keep free from uncleanness and avarice. They were to glory in work and not in idleness.²⁴ In the Lord’s coming the dead shall rise first, then shall the living be caught up to His glory. Suddenly will Christ come: therefore all ought to watch and be sober.²⁵ In all relations of life, the proper honor, patience, forgiveness, joy, soberness, prayer-

24 4. 1-12.

25 13-5. 11.

* See Philippians.

fulness, holiness, discrimination should be used.²⁶ After an earnest charge that this epistle be read before all, Paul closes with the benediction.²⁷ 26 5. 12-26.
27 27, 28.

Summary.—In great trials Christians must hold fast to the truth, and live worthily of the Lord. Then can they confidently look to His sudden coming at which the dead shall rise first.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. By the strength of God's word all trials can be borne.
2. The Christian cannot receive his glory here.
3. He must be free from the world, its license and avarice.
4. He must look for Christ, who shall raise the dead and take up the living.

II THESSALONIANS.

Its Character.—This second letter resembles the first in character, and refers to it.²⁸ The Thessalonians had progressed in faith and borne their trials with fortitude.²⁹ Yet the persecution seems to have become severer, and Paul breaks forth into holy, passionate announcement of judgment and destruction of the enemies.³⁰ All that exalts itself against Christ shall be destroyed. Some of the Thessalonians were still idle and unruly.³¹ The others had been comforted about their dead, but were now more excited about the speedy coming of the Lord.³² Their error had been confirmed by a forged letter of Paul,³³ and he writes, that the greeting with his own hand is the sign of genuineness.³⁴ This true letter was sent probably in the summer of 53 A. D. 28 2. 15.
29 1. 3, 4.
30 1. 5 ff.;
2. 5 ff.
31 3. 4, 10, 11.
32 2. 1 ff.
33 2. 2.
34 3. 17.

Its Purpose.—The main purpose is to teach that the Lord's coming is not imminent. Many expecting the Lord had, in excitement, given up work.³⁵ Paul tells them that "the man of sin"³⁶ must be developed first. There is still "he who now letteth," *i. e.*, a restrainer.³⁷ A restraining power represented by a person is keeping back the full outgrowth of wickedness. When this power shall cease, then shall Christ come soon. Over against Him is the "man of sin," the Anti-christ. As Christ is revealed, the Son of salvation, so there is a reve-

³⁸ 2. 3. lation of the "son of perdition."³⁸ As Christ, God, is worshipped, so
³⁹ 2. 4. Antichrist makes himself God to be worshipped.³⁹ As Christ brings
⁴⁰ 2. 7. the mystery of godliness, there is "the mystery of iniquity."⁴⁰ As
⁴¹ 2. 9. Christ has signs and wonders, so Antichrist has Satanic signs and
⁴² 2. 8. wonders.⁴¹ But Christ shall consume that Wicked One, the Antichrist,
 with the spirit of His mouth.⁴²

Contents.—*Two parts* are found in this letter: First, the doctrinal;⁴³ second, the practical.⁴⁴

⁴³ 1, 2. First—After thanksgiving for spiritual growth and patience in
⁴⁴ 3. persecution,⁴⁵ Paul points to the day of impartial judgment, of the
⁴⁵ 1. 1-4. refreshment of the saints, and punishment of the wicked.⁴⁶ Christ
⁴⁶ 5-9. shall then be glorified in the saints, and they in Him.⁴⁷ There shall be
⁴⁷ 10-12. no day of Christ until the full revelation of the man of sin. He is
⁴⁸ 2. 1-12. still restrained.⁴⁸ But Christians shall thank God for their salvation
⁴⁹ 13-17. and stand fast.⁴⁹

⁵⁰ 3. 1-5. Second—In the love of God the Thessalonians are to be firm and
 wait patiently for Christ.⁵⁰ From the idle and unruly they are to
 withdraw. All are to work. The Apostle did so for example's sake,
⁵¹ 6-12. and asked for no support.⁵¹ All are encouraged to obedience, and are
⁵² 13-18. given the benediction.⁵²

Summary.—It is idle to speculate about the Lord's coming, which is unknown. But as His kingdom develops, Satan's kingdom will grow and be represented by Antichrist. He will in all things imitate Christ. But as yet his power is held back. The full sway of the "man of sin" is a sign of the end. To the unbeliever, judgment brings condemnation; to the believer, joy and hope.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. We must wait for the Lord, but not try to determine the time.
2. Satan will demand in Antichrist divine honor and do supernatural works.
3. In this world God uses human governments to restrain the full freedom of sin.
4. At the end wickedness will rule unbridled.
5. Then shall Christ come to destroy the wicked and deliver the saints.

I AND II TIMOTHY.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Pastoral Epistles.—The letters to Timothy and Titus are called the pastoral epistles. They contain directions for pastoral work. In style they agree, though II Timothy shows peculiarities. In general their vocabulary differs from the other Pauline letters; their structure is loose, and their forms more stereotyped. Favorite expressions are: "This is a faithful saying,"¹ "God our Saviour,"² "sound doctrine,"³ "sound speech,"⁴ "faithful word,"⁵ "sound words."⁶ Christian life, especially in I Timothy, is viewed as "godliness."⁷ Yet these new terms find their explanation in the aim of these letters to instruct pastors.

God is called Saviour because the gospel and grace are God's,⁸ and in reconciliation God was in Christ,⁹ and Christ is God. Doctrine was ever important to Paul;¹⁰ and we find in these epistles that his great teaching of justification by faith,¹¹ and therefore his opposition to works¹² and to emphasis on circumcision and the law,¹³ have not ceased. He meets the new errors¹⁴ which cluster about Jewish fables, genealogies and vain affirmations of the law.¹⁵ They cause idle discussions and strife.¹⁶ The errorists teach "doctrines of devils" and "lies in hypocrisy," forbid marriage and command abstinence from food.¹⁷ There is a claim to knowledge "falsely so called."¹⁸ But these heresies are of the same kind as the Jewish-heathen errors warded off in Colossians. That against them the Church and Christ are upheld¹⁹ is natural. The high estimate of the Church is only a special application of the truth in Ephesians.²⁰ The Christ as "God manifest in the flesh" is the same that is proclaimed in Colossians and Philippians. It is also natural that the officers in the Church and their duties should be enumerated, and directions for discipline and for pastoral conduct toward various classes given. But while the "widows" seem to be a

- ¹ 1 Tim. 1. 15;
- ² 4. 9.
- ³ 2 Tim. 2. 11.
- ⁴ Tit. 3. 8.
- ⁵ 2 1 Tim. 1. 1;
- ⁶ 2. 3; 4. 10.
- ⁷ Titus 1. 3;
- ⁸ 2. 10; 3. 4.
- ⁹ 1 Tim. 1. 10.
- ¹⁰ 2 Tim. 4. 3.
- ¹¹ Tit. 1. 9; 2. 1
- ¹² 4 Tit. 2. 8.
- ¹³ 5 Tit. 1. 9.
- ¹⁴ 6 2 Tim. 1. 13.
- ¹⁵ 7 1 Tim. 2. 2,
- ¹⁶ 10; 3. 16; 4. 7
- ¹⁷ 8; 6. 3 ff.
- ¹⁸ 2 Tim. 3. 5.
- ¹⁹ Tit. 1. 1.
- ²⁰ 8 Rom. 1. 1.
- ¹ 1 Cor. 3. 10.
- ² 9 2 Cor. 5. 19.
- ³ 10 Rom. 16. 17.
- ⁴ 11 Tit. 3. 5 ff.
- ⁵ 12 2 Tim. 1. 9.
- ⁶ 13 Tit. 1. 10, 14;
- ⁷ 3. 9.
- ⁸ 14 1 Tim. 1. 5 ff.,
- ⁹ 19; 6. 5.
- ¹⁰ 2 Tim. 2. 8;
- ¹¹ 3. 8, 13.
- ¹² Tit. 1. 10;
- ¹³ 3. 9.
- ¹⁴ 15 1 Tim. 1. 4, 7.
- ¹⁵ 2 Tim. 4. 4.
- ¹⁶ Tit. 1. 14;
- ¹⁷ 3. 9.
- ¹⁸ 16 1 Tim. 1. 4, 6.
- ¹⁹ 2 Tim. 2. 16,
- ²⁰ 23.
- ¹ Tit. 1. 10.
- ² 17 1 Tim. 4. 2 ff.
- ³ 18 1 Tim. 6. 20.
- ⁴ 19 1 Tim. 3. 15 ff.
- ⁵ 20 cp. Eph. 1.
- ⁶ 23.

²¹ Acts 6; 14.
23.

1 Thess. 5. 12.
Rom. 12. 7 ff.

1 Cor. 12. 14.
Eph. 4. 11.

²² 1 Tim. 3. 16.

²³ 1 Tim. 2. 1 ff.

²⁴ 1 Tim. 1.

12 ff.; 2. 7.

2 Tim. 1. 11.

new class of persons for service in the Church, yet the other offices are found there early and rest upon the gifts of grace.²¹ The hymn,²² which is a confession, finds its counterpart in Ephesians 5. 14; and in the common prayer, Acts 4. 24ff., is the foundation for the exhortation²³ to congregational prayer. All these elements do not point beyond the time of Paul, who remembers his past, but glories in his ministry and apostleship.²⁴ The pastoral letters call, however, for an extension of Paul's life beyond the account in Acts.

I TIMOTHY.

²⁵ Phil. 1. 19,
25; 2. 24.

²⁶ Acts 20. 22,
24; 21. 13.

²⁷ Rom. 15. 24.

²⁸ 1. 3.

²⁹ 3. 14; 4. 13.

³⁰ 1. 3.

When Paul writes to his constant scholar and helper, Timothy, he is again free. His expectation,²⁵ which rested upon the observation of the outcome of his trial at Rome,* was realized. It is different from his expectation of death as he goes to Jerusalem.²⁶ Perhaps he had first gone to Spain.²⁷ But he had also made a journey to Macedonia,²⁸ and hopes to come to Ephesus, where Timothy now is,²⁹ and is to remain.³⁰ Timothy is to supervise the whole Church. The directions given do not fit any earlier time. Nor is the stay of Timothy that of Acts 20. 1ff., for Timothy had to accompany Paul to Macedonia. The short trip of Paul to Corinth † is also inconsistent with the statements here, that imply a long absence and no presence shortly before. It is most probable, then, that Paul is on the return from Spain, and wrote this letter probably in 65 A. D.

³¹ 1. 18; 4. 11;
5. 21;

6. 9, 11, 20.

³² 4. 12.

³³ 5. 23;

cp. 4. 8.

³⁴ 4. 7; 6. 20.

A Letter to a Pastor.—Timothy is occupying the place of the Apostle's representative in Ephesus. His work is that in the organized Church. This letter is, then, a letter for the pastor in his parish. It seems as though Timothy needed stirring up. He is most earnestly enjoined and warned.³¹ No one is to despise his youth, but he is to be an example.³² Yet in his bodily weakness he is to make provision for his body.³³ But the main object of this letter is to warn Timothy against empty, wordy heresies, which the teachers are to avoid.³⁴

* Compare Philippians.

† See II Corinthians.

Contents of I Timothy.—After the greeting³⁵ Timothy is³⁵ 1. 1, 2. exhorted (1) to keep sound doctrine.³⁶ Grace is the truth, of which³⁶ 3-11. Paul's life is a proof.³⁷ This charge Timothy is to hold against apos-³⁷ 12-17. tates.³⁸ (2) Order is to be kept in worship. Prayer is to be devoutly³⁸ 18-20. offered for all men,³⁹ and woman is not to teach publicly, but to learn³⁹ 2. 1-7. in silent subjection.⁴⁰ (3) Church officers, whether bishops,⁴¹ or dea-⁴⁰ 8-15. cons,⁴² are to have due qualifications. (4) After the mystery of godli-⁴¹ 3. 1-7. ness is announced, which the Church, as the pillar and ground of the⁴² 8-13. truth, keeps,⁴³ Timothy is warned against heretics,⁴⁴ and enjoined to be⁴³ 14-16. a true teacher.⁴⁵ (5) He is shown wisdom in regard to the old,⁴⁶ the⁴⁴ 4. 1-11. widows,⁴⁷ the elders,⁴⁸ servants⁴⁹ and errorists.⁵⁰ (6) His own life must⁴⁵ 12-16. be free from worldliness,⁵¹ and his faith be exemplified in his walk.⁵²⁴⁶ 5. 1, 2. The rich are to be exhorted to do good,⁵³ and false teaching is to⁴⁷ 2-16. be avoided.⁵⁴⁴⁸ 17-25.
⁴⁹ 6. 1, 2.
⁵⁰ 3-5.
⁵¹ 6-11.
⁵² 12-16.
⁵³ 17-19.
⁵⁴ 20-21.

II TIMOTHY.

This *second letter* shows Paul as again a captive. He is in chains in Rome.⁵⁵ For his work as an apostle he is imprisoned,⁵⁶ 55 1. 8, 16, 17; and cannot preach as in the first captivity.⁵⁷ Others must carry on⁵⁶ 2. 9. the work. He is chained like a criminal,⁵⁸ yet his helpers can visit⁵⁷ 1. 12. him.⁵⁹ Demas has gone back into the world, Crescens is working in⁵⁸ 2. 9. Galatia, Titus in Dalmatia.⁶⁰ Only Luke is with Paul,⁶¹ and Tim-⁵⁹ 4. 11, 12, 21. othy is to come at once, before winter, and bring Mark.⁶² For Paul is⁶⁰ 4. 10. looking to the end of his earthly fight.⁶³ His contest will soon be⁶¹ 4. 11. ended, and he is ready to be offered up.⁶⁴* The Lord who delivered him⁶² 4. 9, 11, 21. in past persecutions,⁶⁵ and once before out of the mouth of the Roman⁶³ 4. 7. lion,⁶⁶ has now for him the crown of righteousness.⁶⁷ All these indica-⁶⁴ 4. 6. tions make it probable that this letter was written in the summer of⁶⁵ 3. 11. 66 A. D., shortly before Paul suffered martyrdom.⁶⁶ 4. 17.
⁶⁷ 4. 8.

A Letter to a Missionary.—Timothy is here exhorted to the work of proclaiming the Gospel.⁶⁸ From the day that Paul accepted⁶⁸ 4. 5. him as helper he was a preacher of the Gospel,⁶⁹ and had thus⁶⁹ 1. 6.

* Compare the same and similar expressions in the first captivity.—(Phil. 1. 23, 30; 2. 17; 3. 14.)

70 3. 10 ff. approved himself.⁷⁰ This is the letter for the pastor as missionary. The warfare in the extension of the Kingdom⁷¹ is commended.
 71 2. 3.
 72 2. 2; 4. 1 ff. Timothy shall continue the work and commit it to others also.⁷²
 73 1. 1, 2. **Contents.**—After the greeting,⁷³ and the acknowledgment of Timothy's fidelity,⁷⁴ he is encouraged to remain true to the gospel,⁷⁵ for which Paul suffers, whom some have turned away from, while Onesiphorus refreshed him.⁷⁶ Courage and constancy are to mark Timothy,⁷⁷ after Paul's example.⁷⁸ He is to avoid word-strifes and approve himself, especially in view of eternity.⁷⁹ The corrupt men are described, whose errors Timothy is to avoid,⁸⁰ while he is to hold to the true doctrine of Paul and the Scriptures.⁸¹ The true word is to be preached against the errorists, though men turn away.⁸² Paul predicts his end,⁸³ and Timothy is asked to come soon.⁸⁴ With personal directions and greetings Paul closes his last letter.⁸⁵

Summary.—The work of the ministry is to extend the Church, and to maintain it when established. In doing this, error must be avoided and warned against, and the truth preached. Order must be observed and wisdom shown toward all classes of men. Discipline dare not be wanting. The life of the pastor must be free from worldliness, and be an example to others, while it glorifies Christ, who is served. All officers of the Church must have gifts and lead a holy life. Woman is not to teach publicly.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The Church must be extended and maintained.
2. A true teacher holds to sound doctrine and opposes error.
3. The life of a pastor must be Christ-like.
4. All officers of the Church must be duly qualified and holy.
5. Order must be kept in the Church.
6. Woman's true sphere is the home.

TITUS—PHILEMON.

CHAPTER XV.

TITUS.

The Epistle to Titus.—The third pastoral letter is addressed to Titus. He was by birth a Gentile,¹ but a child of Paul by faith, converted on the first missionary tour. Paul refused to circumcise him, that evangelical freedom and the gospel might stand against the Jewish demands. Titus became Paul's constant attendant,³ and during the third missionary journey was sent from Ephesus to Corinth. After this he is known again only through this letter.

¹ Gal. 2. 8.
² Tit. 1. 4.

³ 2. Cor. 7. 13,
14; 8. 6, 16 ff.;
12. 18.

After his first captivity Paul had been also in the island of Crete,⁴ shortly before this letter was written. Its style and manner connect it closely with I Timothy, and it was probably written in the same year, 65 A. D.

⁴ 1. 5.

Its Object.—Paul wrote to Titus to aid him in establishing the Church in Crete. While I Timothy is the letter for the established Church in Ephesus⁵ under Timothy's supervision,⁶ and II Timothy is the epistle for the general work and extension of the Kingdom, Titus is the letter for the *organization of a new church*.

⁵ cp. 1 Tim. 5.
17 ff.
⁶ 1 Tim. 3. 15.

Conditions to be Met.—Wherever Paul went he began to order, organize and place elders as soon as a congregation had gathered about the gospel. This he did from the beginning.⁷ In Crete such work had also been begun, and Titus was to continue. This inceptive organization may explain why the deacons and widows, mentioned in the fully organized Church at Ephesus,⁸ are not yet found here. Great difficulties seem to have beset Paul in his work at Crete, not only because of the idle, deceptive character of the Cretans,⁹ but also because Jewish errorists¹⁰ had come, who opposed sound doctrine,¹¹ were unruly and reprobate,¹² and by their teaching and disputing disturbed Christian homes.¹³ They worked mainly for

⁷ 1 Thess. 5. 12
Acts 14. 23.

⁸ 1 Tim. 5. 3 ff

⁹ 1. 12.
¹⁰ 1. 10; 3. 9.
¹¹ 1. 9.
¹² 1. 10, 16.
¹³ 1. 11.

14 1. 11. "filthy lucre's sake."¹⁴ As heretics they caused separation, and were
 15 3. 10. to be rejected after two admonitions.¹⁵ So deeply was Paul grieved
 and so many Cretans seemed to have followed the deceivers, that
 Paul sends greetings only to those who love him and his helpers in
 16 3. 15. the faith.¹⁶ Titus is to show himself a pattern in life and sound
 17 2. 7, 8. teaching,¹⁷ that the accusations of the liars¹⁸ may be vain. Paul, in
 18 1. 12. all he says, speaks as an apostle.¹⁹
 19 1. 1.

While Titus is doing his work he is to dispatch Zenas, the
 20 3. 13. lawyer,²⁰ and Apollos on their journey. He is to come to Paul and
 spend the winter with Paul at Nicopolis, when Artemas or Tychicus is
 21 3. 12. sent to him.²¹

Though the main purpose of this letter is practical, yet against
 error Paul summarizes the doctrine of free grace as it is applied in
 22 3. 5 ff. baptism²² with wonderful power. He combines all the essential ele-
 ments in the earlier letters on the relation of baptism to Christian life.

Its Contents.—The plan of Titus is as simple as I Timothy. After
 23 1. 1-4. an introduction,²³ Paul lays down the qualification for elders.²⁴ Excel-
 24 5-9. lent men are to be sought, for errorists are numerous, against whom the
 sound doctrine must be defended.²⁵ In accordance with this doctrine
 25 10-16. the duties of old and young, free and slaves,²⁶ are to be unfolded.
 26 2. 1-10. The saving grace of God is also educative, and teaches men to deny
 ungodliness and live holily.²⁷ This life of obedience to authority,²⁸
 27 11-15. gentleness and meekness to men, comes from the regenerating love of
 28 3. 1-4. God, experienced in baptism. It leads to a blessed hope and good
 works.²⁹ With heretics Titus is to have nothing to do.³⁰ After per-
 29 5-8. sonal directions and greetings Paul closes.³¹
 30 9-11.
 31 12-15.

Summary.—In establishing a church the office of the Word must
 be well bestowed. It is to guard against error, defend the truth and
 lead men into holiness. Sound doctrine, accompanied by holy life,
 is the first object. It flows from the teaching of God's free mercy
 and justification.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The ministry of the Word must be kept pure.
2. Able and holy men should fill it.

3. Error must be met and heretics excluded.
4. Sound doctrine must ever be taught.
5. All sound doctrine centres in the truth of God's mercy and justification of the sinner.
6. In baptism God gives His regenerating Spirit of grace.

PHILEMON.

When Tychicus bore the letters to the Colossians³² and Ephe- ³² Col. 4. 7.
sians during Paul's first captivity, about 62 A. D., he also carried this
letter to Philemon. Philemon, whose wife was Apphia, and whose
probable son Archippus³³ was an elder, had been converted by ³³ ver 1.
Paul.³⁴ Philemon was a well-to-do Christian of Colossæ, in whose house ^{Col. 4. 17.}
³⁴ ver. 19.
Christians gathered.³⁵ Onesimus, his slave, who had been unprofit- ³⁵ 2.
able and run away,³⁶ came to Paul in Rome, and was converted. ³⁶ 11, 18.
Paul now sends him back, a Christian, to Philemon, with Tychicus
and this letter.

It is a letter of personal request and love, charmingly written
with a certain playfulness,* but with a fine rhythm and eloquence of
true friendship and Christian love.

Contents.—After the salutation,³⁷ Paul thanks for Philemon's ³⁷ 1-3.
love and faith, and prays for him, who refreshed the saints.³⁸ But he ³⁸ 4-7.
has a request. He might command, but he, the aged, suffering
apostle, asks in love.³⁹ Onesimus is his spiritual child, and will now ³⁹ 8, 9.
be profitable.⁴⁰ Paul loves him as himself, and sends him back only ⁴⁰ 10, 11.
out of regard to Philemon.⁴¹ It was providential that Onesimus ⁴¹ 12-14.
should go away for a short time, that Philemon might have him as a
brother, whom he should now love in the Lord, and not only as a
slave in the flesh.⁴² Paul asks that Onesimus be received as he him- ⁴² 15, 16.
self would be.⁴³ Any loss that Onesimus caused Paul will repay, and ⁴³ 17.
gives a bond by his signature,⁴⁴ though Philemon owes all to Paul. ⁴⁴ 18, 19.
He knows that Philemon will do more than he asks,⁴⁵ and expects to ⁴⁵ 20, 21.
visit him.⁴⁶ All send greetings.⁴⁷ ⁴⁶ 22.
⁴⁷ 23, 24.

**e. g.* Paul plays on the name Onesimus, which means profitable. He is
now to be as his name, and not unprofitable (11, 15).

Its Value.—This short epistle is of great value. It permits us to look into Paul's deep, considerate, helpful love, to note his delicate gentlemanliness and refinement, combined with true frankness and wonderful tact. The power of brotherly love among early Christians is seen. It entered upon the solution of the social question of that time, slavery. What Paul inculcates, I Cor. 7. 21, 22; Gal. 3. 28; Eph. 6. 5; Col. 3. 22ff.; I Tim. 6. 1, 2; Tit. 2. 9, 10, is shown in practice. The slave, who often became unruly and dangerous, is not suppressed as by the Romans. He is made a brother in Christ. But this spiritual equality does not at once change his social standing and condition in the world. Inwardly the gap between master and slave is bridged over. The slave is no longer a chattel, but a soul. He receives the motive of love for duty, and the master regards him in Christ, and loves him thus. This relation will bring outward change. Christianity, however, has no program of revolution, but of individual regeneration, and of the establishment of universal brotherly love in Christ.

Summary.—Christian love can save the lowest. It makes them saints and brothers. Before God in Christ all are alike. But outward differences of station are not violently abolished. Their sinful exaggeration is overcome by love of Christ. The power of Christian personality must regenerate society. The Church must reform spiritually by love, and not by law or force.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The love of Christ saves the lost.
2. It makes true men and women.
3. In Christ all are alike.
4. In the world there are different calls.
5. Outward differences are temporal.
6. The Church does not reform by force and law, but leavens the world with love.
7. Man solves social questions by blood and impatiently.
8. God would have them solved by waiting, sacrificing love.

HEBREWS.

CHAPTER XVI.

Style and Authorship.—Only in a free way is Hebrews called an epistle. It is rather a general treatise, which has a few elements of a letter in the personal references in 13. 22 f. Its style is very poetic and rhetorical. Full, sonorous, significant words, and telling figures of speech are combined in beautiful periods. The order of words shows thorough grammatical training. The spirit of the form is like Hebrew wisdom unfolded with Greek refinement. Hebrews is the most elegant of the New Testament books. This peculiarity of style and lack of definite historical testimony make it clear that Paul, who claims to be “rude in speech,”¹ did not write this letter. Paul mostly writes in the singular; in this epistle the editorial plural prevails.² Paul mostly uses “Jesus Christ,” or “Christ Jesus,” not so often “Jesus” as does this letter. Yet single words and expressions agree with those of Paul’s letters. Apparently one of Paul’s disciples, who knew Timothy,³ wrote Hebrews. The author had not seen Jesus, but only heard His message.⁴ It is possible, as Luther thought, that Apollos, the eloquent Alexandrian, wrote Hebrews. The language and references⁵ suit him. The great exhortations, with which the teaching always ends, also point to the mighty preacher.⁶ But there is no certainty. God only knows the author.

To Whom Addressed.—The people addressed were Hebrews. The title, added later, agrees with the reference 13. 13: the figurative expression, “going without the camp,” means to leave the Jewish people. The forefathers,⁷ must also be Jews, of the seed of Abraham.⁸ All the references to Jewish history, ritual and practice presuppose Hebrew readers. The greetings from Italian Jews⁹ make it probable, that the letter was sent to the Jewish members of the Roman Church.* They have their own meeting place,¹⁰ and their

¹ 2 Cor. 11. 6.

² 2. 5;
5. 11;
6. 1, 3, 9;
the singular
13. 19, 22.

³ 13. 23.

⁴ 2. 3.

⁵ cp. Tit. 3. 13.

⁶ 2. 1 ff;
3. 1 ff;
6. 1 ff;
10. 19 ff;
12. 1 ff.

⁷ 1. 1; 3. 9;
11. 2, 39 ff;
12. 23.
⁸ 2. 16.
⁹ 13. 24.

¹⁰ 10. 25.

* Compare Romans.

own elders,¹¹ but are not to forget to greet all.¹² The writer hopes soon to come to them.¹³ Behind them lies the memory of great suffering.¹⁴ This was possibly the persecution of Nero, who died 68. If the forty years of Heb. 3. 9 are to have a real application, the time should be later than 70. Early testimony makes it plausible that the time was not later than 80 A. D.

Its Occasion and Object.—These Hebrews, who had shown their labor of love¹⁵ and were purged from dead works,¹⁶ are now in danger of relapsing.¹⁷ Some need the special help of the others,¹⁸ but they are all in danger of apostasy from the living God and Christian faith.¹⁹ They are spiritually dull of hearing,²⁰ have become weary and faint in faith,²¹ and need constant urging to hold fast to the true hope,²² and the full promise of the people of God.²³ Faith, as the substance of things hoped for,²⁴ which was the power at all times, is suffering. In afflictions the Hebrews are becoming faint.²⁵ Like their fathers they are dissatisfied,²⁶ and seem ready like Esau to sell their birthright.²⁷ They are in danger of rejecting Christ and His blood.²⁸ Therefore they must be upheld in faith and trust in God's grace against strange doctrines²⁹ of legal observances.

Its Theme.—Consequently Christianity is emphasized as bringing the better, final and eternal hope, by which we draw nigh to God.³⁰ It came through Jesus, the Son of God, who is the true prophet, above all angels, above Moses, but who is chiefly the great high priest. Through Him is the real atonement,³¹ clearing the conscience,³² and giving full access to God.³³ There is now an eternal salvation,³⁴ redemption,³⁵ inheritance³⁶ and covenant.³⁷

Contents.—This truth is first unfolded,³⁸ and then followed by practical injunctions.³⁹

I. Jesus is the Eternal Son, who has spoken as the final prophet.⁴⁰ As the Father's image He is above all angels. He is the Son above servants, king above subjects, creator above creatures.⁴¹ For this cause salvation, brought about by His death, is so great and must be kept.⁴² Mighty is Jesus above Moses, who faithful as he was, was but servant.⁴³ But faithful must every one be, who would obtain the rest, which the fathers lost.⁴⁴ Fidelity is possible because

- 11 13. 7.
 12 13. 24.
 13 13. 19.
 14 11. 37 ff;
 13. 7.
 15 6. 10.
 16 9. 14.
 17 3. 12;
 4. 1, 11;
 12. 15, 16.
 18 10. 24;
 12. 13, 15.
 19 2. 1; 3. 7;
 4. 2;
 6. 4 ff;
 10. 26 ff;
 12. 17, 25.
 20 5. 11 ff.
 21 12. 3 ff.
 22 3. 1;
 4. 14;
 10. 23.
 23 3. 6, 14;
 4. 1 ff;
 6. 11 ff;
 10. 23 ff;
 11. 40.
 12. 26.
 24 11. 1 ff.
 25 10. 32.
 26 4. 2 ff;
 cp. 3. 7 ff.
 27 12. 16.
 28 6. 6;
 10. 29.
 29 13. 9.
 30 7. 19.
 31 10. 4.
 32 9. 9.
 33 10. 19.
 34 5. 9.
 35 9. 12.
 36 9. 15.
 37 13. 20.
 38 1. 1—
 10. 18.
 39 19—
 13. 25.
 40 1. 1-3.
 41 4-14.
 42 2.
 43 3. 1-6.
 44 7-4. 13.

Christ is the great high priest. He is more than Aaron, and is an eternal priest, after the order of Melchizedek, for an eternal salvation.⁴⁵ But ⁴⁵ 4. 14—5. 10. the Hebrews do not understand, nor hold fast to God's promise, as they should.⁴⁶ ⁴⁶ 11—6. 20.

The Great High Priest.—The great truth is : Christ is the high priest after the order of Melchizedek.⁴⁷ Melchizedek is the type of ⁴⁷ 7. 1—10. 18. the eternal high priest, not by descent, but by God's appointment. The Levitical priesthood gave tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham.⁴⁸ ⁴⁸ 7. 1-10. Jesus is the final priest, by God's oath.⁴⁹ He saves, intercedes at ⁴⁹ 11-24. God's right hand, is the priest of a new, eternal covenant, abolishing Aaron's order.⁵⁰ The earthly, imperfect tabernacle,⁵¹ is taken away ⁵⁰ 25—8. 13. by Christ's sacrifice, which opened the heavenly sanctuary, brought ⁵¹ 9. 1-10. eternal salvation,⁵² and established a new covenant.⁵³ The heavenly ⁵² 11-14. ⁵³ 15-20. sanctuary is sanctified by Christ.⁵⁴ The prophetic sacrifices of propitiation are at an end, because Christ has offered Himself once for all for our sins and made complete atonement. There is now forgiveness of sins.⁵⁵ ⁵⁴ 21-28. ⁵⁵ 10. 1-18.

II. The Believers are to Remain True to the confession and fellowship of faith.⁵⁶ The wilful sinners shall be brought to terrible ⁵⁶ 19-28. judgment.⁵⁷ Those who in past trials stood fast by faith⁵⁸ should ⁵⁷ 26-31. ⁵⁸ 32—11. 2. gather new inspiration from the history of the power of faith in Old Testament saints.⁵⁹ With patience ought they persevere in their Christian ⁵⁹ 3-40. race,⁶⁰ and arise from sinful indifference,⁶¹ for great is the glory of ⁶⁰ 12. 1-11. ⁶¹ 12-17. the new covenant, and terrible the punishment of denial.⁶² Christian ⁶² 18-29. virtues should prevail,⁶³ and Christian truth be kept against Jewish ⁶³ 13. 1-6. errors.⁶⁴ The elders are to be obeyed, and the writer asks for ⁶⁴ 7-16. prayers.⁶⁵ With a benediction⁶⁶ from the great Shepherd of the ⁶⁵ 17-19. ⁶⁶ 20-25. everlasting covenant, a short exhortation, and personal greeting, this great epistle ends.

Summary.—Our faith grants free access to God. It is the final and eternal faith, for it rests on Jesus the great prophet and the final mediator. He has effected the one, everlasting redemption. The priesthood of propitiation is fulfilled in Him. He lives to intercede.. To adopt another priesthood is to fall back into abolished Judaism with its sacrifices and laws.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Our faith is the fulfillment of past hope.
3. It is a mighty evidence of future hope.
3. It grants free access to God.
4. Jesus has opened the way by His sacrifice.
5. His prophecy pointed to His work.
6. He is the only High-priest, and intercedes for us with God.
7. It is terrible to neglect, despise or reject His salvation.

ST. JAMES.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Catholic Epistles. Like Hebrews this epistle has a general character. It begins like a letter, but is a homily. It opens the series of Catholic (*i. e.*, general) epistles, which ends with Jude. Despite the great differences in their style and contents, all these letters have yet their common view of truth, and are markedly different from Paul's letters. On account of the common features of their message, they were grouped together. The style of St. James is quite pure and vigorous. But the sentences are mostly short and like proverbs. In form as in thought, this epistle represents New Testament Wisdom. The author is James, the brother of the Lord. Like his brothers, he did not at first believe in Christ,¹ but seems to have become a disciple after the resurrection.² Later he was the leader of the church at Jerusalem.³ The character of his address at the council of Jerusalem is similar in spirit and language to this letter. Because there is as yet no indication of Paul's teaching of justification, and because all conditions in this letter are primitive and simple, it must be placed early. It is probably the first writing of the New Testament, composed about 50 A. D.

¹ John 7. 5.

² Acts 1. 14.

³ Acts 12. 17;
15. 13 ff;
21. 18.
1 Cor. 15. 7;
Gal. 1. 19.

To Whom Addressed.—It is sent to the twelve tribes, which are scattered abroad (*lit.*, in the diaspora). "The twelve tribes" is a territorial designation and would not include Jews beyond the borders of Israel. But in this epistle of St. James it is probable that the writer is thinking of spiritual Israel, *i. e.*, the Church, which is scattered far beyond earthly Israel and centres its hopes in heaven. At that time the Church consisted mainly of Jews in the flesh, who were outcasts in their own city, and looked, though with great weakness, for the heavenly Jerusalem.

Reproofs.—To such Jewish Christians everywhere, who were

4 1. 2 ff. oppressed,⁴ James sent this letter. It points out certain sins to be
 5 1. 18, 21; remedied. These Christians do not lack in accepting the truth,⁵ but some
 6 2. 1; 4. 17. are too zealous, free of tongue,⁶ condemning and cursing, rather than
 7 1. 26; helping their brethren.⁷ There was much idle strife.⁸ Prayer did not
 8 3. 1 ff. rest on firm faith.⁹ Real Christian life,¹⁰ and a walk corresponding to
 9 3. 10; Christian profession, was wanting.¹¹ Works of mercy and patience did
 10 4. 11 ff. not prevail.¹² Earthly goods were overestimated, and trade was carried
 11 5. 16, 19. on without looking to God.¹³ The rich oppressed the poor,¹⁴ and were
 12 3. 14 ff.; preferred even in worship.¹⁵ The poor desired to have,¹⁶ and were
 13 4. 1 ff. impatient not only against their brethren,¹⁷ but also against God.¹⁸
 14 1. 6 ff.; The friendship of this world was sought,¹⁹ and all must be reminded of
 15 4. 3, 8; the vanity of worldly things,²⁰ and the real worth of Christian faith.²¹
 16 5. 15.
 17 1. 22 f.
 18 2. 14 ff.
 19 1. 27;
 20 2. 13, 15;
 21 5. 7 ff.
 22 4. 13.
 23 5. 4.
 24 2. 2 ff.
 25 4. 2.
 26 5. 7 ff.
 27 1. 13; 4. 7.
 28 4. 4.
 29 1. 10 ff;
 30 4. 14;
 31 5. 2 ff.

Exhortations.—To meet these dangers James emphasized the need of living faith to attain to Christian perfection. He goes back to the simple words of the sermon on the mount,* and demands real deeds of Christian life. Jesus is to be believed in²² as the Lord of glory.²³ The sufferings and death of Jesus are not mentioned, but His glory presupposes these.²⁴ Men must be born again by the Word,²⁵ and live in the new law of liberty.²⁶ This leads to perfection,²⁷ and is the royal law of love.²⁸ Finally judgment will come,²⁹ and those who love the Lord shall have eternal life.³⁰

21 1. 9, 12, 17 ff;
 22 2. 5; 4. 6;
 23 5. 7 ff.
 24 1. 3, 6;
 25 2. 1, 5, 14;
 26 5. 15.
 27 1. 1; 2. 1;
 28 5. 7.
 29 cp. Peter's
 30 sermon,
 31 Acts 2. 15 ff.
 32 1. 18, 21.
 33 1. 25;
 34 2. 12.
 35 1. 4 ff., 22 ff.
 36 2. 1 ff;
 37 3. 2.
 38 2. 8.
 39 2. 13;
 40 4. 12; 5. 9.
 41 1. 12.
 42 e.g., Gal. 2.10.

St. James and St. Paul.—There seems at first glance to be a contradiction between James 2. 14 ff. and St. Paul's teaching.³¹ Paul says we are justified and saved without works, and James asserts that faith without works is dead. But there is no real contradiction. Both use the same terms differently and finally agree. Paul means by faith living dependence on Christ. James opposes those who merely say, that they have faith, but whose faith is an idle profession, weaker than the fear of devils before God.³² The works which Paul condemns

* Compare Matt. 5. 3 and James 2. 5; 1. 9; Matt. 5. 4 and James 4. 9; Matt. 5. 7, 9 and James 2. 13; 3. 17; Matt. 5. 8 and James 4. 8; Matt. 5. 9 and James 3. 18; Matt. 5. 11, 12 and James 1. 2; 5. 10, 11; Matt. 5. 19 and James 1. 19 ff., 25; 2. 10, 11; Matt. 5. 22 and James 1. 20; Matt. 5. 27 and James 2. 10, 11; Matt. 5. 48 and James 1. 4; Matt. 6. 15 and James 2. 13; Matt. 6. 19 and James 5. 2 ff.; Matt. 6. 24, 25 and James 4. 4, 13 ff., etc. There are also parallels to other parts of the gospels, e. g., Luke 12. 21 and James 2. 5; Luke 6. 24 and James 5. 1; Mark 6. 13 and James 5. 14, 15; Matt. 18. 15 and James 5. 16.

are the outward observances of the law. The works which James demands are the deeds of love. These Paul also accepts and demands as effects of faith³³ and fruits of the Spirit.³⁴ He, too, asserts that by the things done in the body we must be judged.³⁵ Justification with Paul is the declaration of forgiveness of sins by God. It bestows an imputed righteousness. James means by justification the righteousness of life demanded by Christ in Matthew 5. 20. This is the outward expression in life of the inward reliance on Christ. Justification, in this sense, is not regarded as the foundation of salvation, but only as the proof of saving faith.

Directions for Christian Living.—It is the purpose of James to show the way toward perfection in a series of inwardly connected admonitions. In outward trials faith must work patience, and prayer help the lack of wisdom³⁶ Riches must not be gloried in,³⁶ 1. 2-8. but eternal life.³⁷ In the inward trials of sin the source is traced³⁷ 9-11. to selfish desire³⁸ and must be conquered. For this, God, the giver³⁸ 12-15. of every good gift, gives His Word as the seed of regeneration.³⁹ It³⁹ 16-20. must be truly received with meekness.⁴⁰ Such, gentle acceptance⁴⁰ 19, 20. will be followed by obedience to the law of liberty in true deeds.⁴¹ 41 21-27. This law is love to the brethren without partiality.⁴² Partiality will⁴² 2. 1-7. lead to judgment.⁴³ But true love follows from real faith. Faith⁴³ 8-18. without works is dead.⁴⁴ The life of freedom includes the bridling of⁴⁴ 14-26. the tongue,⁴⁵ and will avoid strife and bring peace.⁴⁶ Contention⁴⁵ 3. 1-12. comes from worldly desires, that hinder prayer.⁴⁷ Worldliness is⁴⁶ 13-18. against God. But God must be sought,⁴⁸ judgment of the brother and⁴⁷ 4. 1-3. worldly security avoided.⁴⁹ The rich should remember the coming⁴⁸ 4-10, judgment,⁵⁰ the poor are to have patience, and look prayerfully to⁴⁹ 11-17. God's mercy.⁵¹ There must be truthfulness of speech; by prayer,⁵⁰ 5. 1-6. grace and forgiveness of sins are to be sought.⁵² Prayer is mighty, as⁵¹ 7-11. appears from Elijah.⁵³ Spiritual help extended to the weak brings⁵² 12-16. great blessings.⁵⁴ 53 17, 18. 54 19, 20

Summary.—Faith dare not be an idle promise, but a living power, which brings fruit and shows itself to be real before God and men. It must lead to the law of freedom, which is love. This keeps from sin, is firm in trial, gentle in speech, relies on God, seeks not the

world, and makes no distinction of rich and poor. The Christian life thus unfolding leads to increasing perfection.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Faith must be living conviction.
2. It must appear in deeds of love.
3. It must overcome temptation and be strong in trial.
4. Love must avoid sins of the tongue.
5. Worldliness is not right for a believer.
6. The rich are not to be preferred.
7. Trade must not be carried on without God.
8. Perfection must be aimed at in Christian life.
9. The judgment will bring either life or condemnation.

I AND II PETER.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I PETER.

In this letter there is heard the Apostle Peter,¹ but as co-elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ.² As in his early sermons and activity, so here he points to Christ as the rejected stone,³ recognizes the equality of Jewish and heathen converts,⁴ and emphasizes Christ's crucifixion, resurrection and return.⁵

The language and style, however, of this letter, are different from the sermons in Acts, and very distinct from II Peter. Many quotations from the Greek translation of the Old Testament (the Septuagint) are interwoven and interpreted in a vigorous way. But the Greek is pure, accurately and delicately used. The style is simple, impressive, tenderly persuasive and deeply calm.

How and To Whom Written.—Peter's spirit and position, which was like that of James,* are clothed in a Greek dress, because Peter had Silvanus compose this letter.⁶ This disciple of Paul was most able to impress the readers, as Peter must have desired,⁷ with the final oneness of Peter's teaching with Paul's, as appears from many references to Paul's letters.†

This was necessary, for the readers were in the Asian churches founded by Paul. "The strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,"⁸ lived in the Roman provinces of Asia Minor. They were Gentiles, coming out of deep sins⁹ to living faith in God,¹⁰ so that now they are God's people,¹¹

* Compare 1. 6. 7 with James 1. 2 ff.; 1. 23 ff. and James 1. 18; 4. 8 and James 5. 20; 5. 5 ff. and James 4. 6, 7, 10.

† Compare 1. 14 and Rom. 12. 2; 2. 5 and Rom. 12. 1; 2. 6 and Rom. 9. 32 ff.; 2. 10 and Rom. 9. 25; 2. 13 and Rom. 13. 1 ff.; 3. 9 and Rom. 12. 17; 4. 1 and Rom. 6. 7; 4. 10 and Rom. 12. 6 ff.; 5. 1 and Rom. 8. 17. Especially 1. 14 and Eph. 2. 3; 4. 17; 2. 5 and Eph. 2. 20-22; 2. 18 and Eph. 6. 5; 3. 1 ff. and Eph. 5. 22 ff.; 3. 22 and Eph. 1. 20 ff.; 5. 5 and Eph. 5. 21; 5. 8 and Eph. 6. 11.

¹ 1. 1.

² 5. 1.

³ Acts 4. 11;
1 Pet. 2. 7.
⁴ Acts 10. 47;
11. 17; 15. 7 ff.
Gal 2. 7 ff.
1 Pet. 1. 4 ff.;
2. 3 ff.; 5. 1.
⁵ Acts 2. 23 ff.;
3. 13 ff.;
4. 10;
5. 30 ff.;
10. 39 ff.
1 Pet. 1. 3 ff.,
18, 21;
2. 21 ff.; 3. 18,
21 ff.; 4. 1, 5,
13; 5. 1, 4, 10.

⁶ 5. 12.

⁷ cf. 2 Pet. 3.
15 ff.

⁸ 1. 1.

⁹ 1. 14, 18;

¹⁰ 4. 3.

¹¹ 1. 21.

2. 10

12 3. 6. and their women have become Sara's daughters.¹² The time of composition must have been after Paul had written Ephesians.* The place was probably in Rome, for there is no reason to show that
 13 5. 11. Peter was in Babylon.¹³ This term is a figurative use of Rome as the world-power corresponding to ancient Babylon. It is probable that Peter came to Rome with Mark, after Paul had been freed from his first captivity and was journeying westward. In Paul's absence Peter did his duty in addressing Pauline churches through a follower of Paul. This was probably in 64 A. D.

Its Occasion.—The Christians of Asia were in new danger of trials and sufferings,¹⁴ which were coming to all.¹⁵ These were to be so great, that the end and judgment were looked for.¹⁶ Satan was raging.¹⁷ The actual persecution had not yet begun, but the Christians were commonly evil spoken¹⁸ of, because they were Christians¹⁹ and lived a pure life.²⁰ But they must retain such pure life²¹ with a good conscience, suffer reproaches, and return good for evil,²² as did Christ.²³

Its Purpose.—The purpose of this letter was to encourage the believers to hold fast in suffering. To this end they receive the testimony that they stood in the true grace of God.²⁴ As Christ suffered so ought they be willing to suffer for His sake. Deliverance and blessedness will soon come to outweigh all trials. The *keynote* is *hope*. Into this comfort is taken up very rich teaching about the triune God, the eternal Father, the redemption, in particular Christ's descent into hell,²⁵ and the end of all things.

Its Contents.—The glory to come is to be remembered by the pilgrims, who after a greeting,²⁶ are uplifted by the glorious hope of heaven in all their trials.²⁷ By this hope are they to be led to holiness before God,²⁸ brotherly love,²⁹ and life in God's truth.³⁰
 30 23—2. 3. Their high dignity of spiritual priesthood, their holiness as God's
 31 2. 4-10. spiritual house, founded upon Christ, is to be kept in a pure life.³¹ It
 32 11—4. 7. must be retained in all temptations,³² against sin and wrong accusations,³³ as subjects,³⁴ as servants,³⁵ in matrimony,³⁶ and in contrast
 33 11, 12.
 34 13-17.
 35 18-25.
 36 3. 1-7.

* See note above where quotations from Ephesians occur.

with others,³⁷ especially when suffering is borne as Christ suffered ³⁷ 3. 8-12.
 and triumphed.³⁸ The pure life is to be kept against all heathen ³⁸ 13-22.
 immorality.³⁹ It must appear in all relations,⁴⁰ toward God and man, ³⁹ 4. 1-7.
 in the right use of gifts,⁴² and in bearing all ills.⁴³ The elders are to ⁴⁰ 8-5. 11.
 be faithful,⁴⁴ the younger members obedient,⁴⁵ all humbly trusting in ⁴¹ 8-9.
 God,⁴⁶ growing in faith, strong against Satan,⁴⁷ until God shall bring ⁴² 10, 11.
 them to completion.⁴⁸ Personal remarks and greetings end this ⁴³ 12-19.
 letter of consolation.⁴⁹ ⁴⁴ 5. 1-4.
⁴⁵ 5.
⁴⁶ 6, 7.
⁴⁷ 8, 9.
⁴⁸ 10, 11.
⁴⁹ 12-14.

Summary.—Many and great trials come upon the Christian, which he should bear for Christ's sake. To suffer with Christ is to be glorified with Him. But the sufferer must be holy, suffer as a Christian, and rightly observe all relations in humility and purity.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The Christian must suffer as did His Lord.
2. With Christ trials are readily borne.
3. The glory to come is greater than all crosses.
4. The hope is attained by holy, spiritual priests of faith.
5. Holy hope makes a complete, holy life.

II PETER.

The style of II Peter, partly agreeing with Peter's sermons, and having some verbal similarities to I Peter, is much more rhetorical in cast, and less pure in form. It contains striking expressions, rhetorical and strong descriptions. The forceful Peter is clearly felt. He calls himself Simon Peter, an apostle,⁵⁰ who ⁵⁰ 1. 1.
 with the other apostles had seen the Lord,⁵¹ and received His com- ⁵¹ 1. 14, 16-18
 mandments.⁵² Peter had always been reminding the readers of the ⁵² 3. 2.
 truth,⁵³ which they are to keep after his decease.⁵⁴ His constant ⁵³ 1. 12 ff.
 teaching had also taken shape in a former letter.⁵⁵ But this letter is not ⁵⁴ 1. 15.
 our I Peter, which does not fit the description of the former letter,⁵⁶ but ⁵⁵ 3. 1.
 is a lost epistle. Peter also refers to a letter of Paul, which admon- ⁵⁶ 3. 2, 3.
 ished that the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation.⁵⁷ No such ⁵⁷ 3. 15.

trend appears in any admonitions of known Pauline epistles. Consequently another lost letter is referred to. The contents of II Peter point to a late time, as do the many letters which Paul had written.⁵⁸ Peter also is old, expecting death,⁵⁹ and yet not immediately, for he hopes apparently to write again⁶⁰ (this second epistle I *now* write). We know not where Peter wrote. Rome is not mentioned. This letter must then be earlier than our I Peter, written before Peter came to Rome, where he died in the persecution of Nero, probably in the fall of 64 A. D. This letter cannot therefore be later than 62.

To Whom Addressed.—Its readers are also different from our I Peter. They are Jewish Christians in general, before whom the majesty of Christ⁶¹ is especially emphasized, who knew the prophets,⁶² and Old Testament historical and doctrinal facts.⁶³ They are to be strengthened in the hope of the world to come⁶⁴ against the corruption of this world.⁶⁵ Purged from sin,⁶⁶ they are to be established in the truth.⁶⁷ There are unstable men,⁶⁸ who listen to fables,⁶⁹ and over against the prophets⁷⁰ will be ready to hear false teachers.⁷¹ These shall come among, though not out of them,⁷² and are apostate Christians,⁷³ who deny the Lord and His return, despise the powers of the unseen world, and are full of impurity.⁷⁴

Claiming to be teachers,⁷⁵ they seek only their own gain.⁷⁶ They particularly desire the newly converted.⁷⁷ And they shall pervert many to their unnatural sins,⁷⁸ using the love-feasts as an occasion.⁷⁹ For the people to whom Peter writes, this evil teaching is still future, although elsewhere it has begun. What Peter feared happened later.*

Its Aim.—The aim of the letter is to emphasize the majesty and coming of Christ against error. The keynote is: True prophecy is the stronghold against false teaching and unholy life.

Its Contents.—Peter wishing ever greater grace and peace to those in the faith,⁸⁰ admonishes them to cultivate knowledge and virtue, that they may enter the kingdom.⁸¹ To this he is moved as his end approaches. As a witness of Christ's majesty he points to the

* See Jude.

sure word of prophecy.⁸² False teachers will arise, who shall be judged as Sodom and Gomorrah.⁸³ They are fleshly, despise angelic powers,⁸⁴ are voluptuous and impure,⁸⁵ and lead men to destruction.⁸⁶ They are mockers denying the coming of Christ, and say "All things continue as they were from the beginning of the world." But Christ is waiting to lead men to repentance. At last He shall suddenly come.⁸⁷ All are to be ready for Christ's coming, and seek salvation in His longsuffering, as Paul admonishes, whose letters some pervert. Steadfastness, and growth in grace and knowledge of Christ should be the aim.⁸⁸

82 1. 12-21.
83 2. 1-10.
84 11, 12.
85 13-16.
86 17-22.
87 3. 1-18.
88 14-18.

Summary.—The living expectation of Christ's coming must be strong. The prophets and apostles who have seen Christ's majesty are to be believed. And the sinful mockers, who despise heavenly things, deny Christ, live an impure life, and lead others astray for gain, must be avoided.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The attention of a true teacher is constant.
2. He clearly sees and warns against danger.
3. It is wrong to deny Christ's coming because its time cannot be determined.
4. The delay of the last day is to give room for repentance.
5. When men no longer fear heavenly power, they become unholy.
6. The wicked love to lead astray the beginners in Christian life.
7. Only the sure word of prophecy can protect us against all heresy.

I, II, III JOHN, JUDE.

CHAPTER XIX.

I JOHN.

In this general treatise, which neither begins nor ends like a letter, there are many parallels in thought and expression to the Gospel of John.* The same simplicity and depth, the same habit of repeating and extending thought, the same terms and contrasts of light and darkness, life and death, love and hate, the same conceptions of God, Christ and man are found. But new are the expressions, "fellowship with the Father and Son," "perfect love," "Antichrist," "sin unto death," "unction from the Holy One." Where the Gospel describes God as "spirit,"¹ the epistle names Him "love;"² where the Gospel speaks of the Son being in the Father and the Father in the Son,³ the epistle applies to the Christian "dwelling in God," and "God dwelling in him."⁴ Despite great similarity the epistle has its own character and purpose.

John writes as an aged father to children.⁵ He includes with himself others, who have also seen the Word of life,⁶ and are writing of it.⁷ The generation of eye-witnesses and writers is still present. Therefore this epistle cannot have been written later than 90 A. D., possibly soon after the Gospel. John, according to reliable ancient testimony, was then at Ephesus.

To Strengthen Believers.—His purpose is not to bring men to faith, but to strengthen believers in their assurance.⁸ These have forgiveness of sins and the unction of the Spirit;⁹ have acknowledged the eternal Word of God and in Him have conquered the Wicked One in

* Compare 2. 14 and gospel of John 5. 38; 2. 17 and 8. 35; 3. 8 and 8. 44; 3. 13 and 15. 18; 3. 22 and 8. 29; 3. 23 and 13. 34; 4. 6 and 18. 37; 4. 15 and 6. 56; 5. 4 and 3. 6; 5. 9 and 5. 32; 5. 20 and 17. 8.

whom the world lies.¹⁰ The full truth have they heard from the beginning and are to hold fast to it.¹¹ Still they must be told of the danger to come,¹² for they yet have sin and are in a world which tempts all that are in the flesh.¹³ Deeper purification,¹⁴ and more actual love¹⁵ are needed. Many false teachers are about,¹⁶ who are not inwardly Christians, though they move among them.¹⁷ They have gone out from among the Christians, for they were overcome.¹⁸ Their appearance is a sign of the end,¹⁹ and they precede Antichrist, and are antichrists.²⁰ Because of these false prophets, all spirits must be tried.²¹ The great error is the denial that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,²² and that He has come in the flesh.²³

Fellowship with God.—Therefore the Apostles declare what they have seen and heard of Jesus, that the later believers may have fellowship with them. This “fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”²⁴ The fellowship of love with God is to be established through the testimony of those who live in it.

The fellowship of joy arising out of the testimony²⁵ of divine life is to lead to God as light. This light is to free from darkness by men confessing sins,²⁶ receiving forgiveness,²⁷ by their living in love with all, and by forsaking the love of the world.²⁸ In the world are many antichrists, denying the Christ.²⁹

But fellowship with God is sonship. This bringeth sanctification³⁰ and brotherly love,³¹ and is sealed by faith and love to God.³² Men are to be tried by the faith, that Jesus came in the flesh.³³ For with this faith, love riseth out of God,³⁴ for God is love, and His love causeth joy.³⁵ The love that keepeth the commandments comes from conquering faith through the new birth, effected in Christ by the Spirit.³⁶ To strengthen faith in Christ, this letter is written,³⁷ so that the believers may pray truly, be kept from sin and error, and in the knowledge of Christ,³⁸ in whom is truth and eternal life.³⁹

Summary.—There must be growth in the fellowship of love. It can only be increased by entering into fellowship with God as light through Christ. He is to be proclaimed, known and confessed as the Son of God come into the flesh. From Him, God, as love, is to com-

¹⁰ 2. 12-14;
5. 4 ff.;
18 ff.
¹¹ 2. 7, 24, 27;
3. 11.
¹² 2. 18.
¹³ 1. 8 ff.;
2. 1, 16.
¹⁴ 3. 3.
¹⁵ 3. 18; 4. 7.
¹⁶ 2. 18.
¹⁷ 2. 19.
¹⁸ 4. 4.
¹⁹ 2. 22 ff., 28.
²⁰ 2. 18.
²¹ 4. 1 ff.
²² 2. 22 ff.;
5. 1, 5.
²³ 4. 2.
²⁴ 1. 3.
²⁵ 1. 1-4.
²⁶ 5-10.
²⁷ 2. 1-3.
²⁸ 4-17.
²⁹ 18-29.
³⁰ 3. 1-9.
³¹ 10-17.
³² 18-24.
³³ 4. 1-6.
³⁴ 7-15.
³⁵ 16-21.
³⁶ 5. 1-12.
³⁷ 13.
³⁸ 14-18.
³⁹ 19-21.

mune with men, that they may love each other, overcome all error, and live in the Spirit. The line of contact is faith.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. There is sure testimony of eye-witnesses concerning Christ.
 2. He is the eternal life, the Son of God become man.
 3. With Him and the Father there is to be fellowship through the testimony of the Apostles.
 4. Such fellowship is with God as love, and brings love and joy to all.
 5. It is established by faith, which overcomes the world and its error and sin.
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II JOHN.

This second letter, which is similar in thought and style* to the first, was written, perhaps very shortly after the first, by John, who styles himself an elder, a title at times used by the apostles⁴⁰ to designate themselves simply as the venerable fathers. It is addressed to "the elect lady." This may mean a church,⁴¹ or a Christian lady. From the warnings given and from the greeting,⁴² † it seems best to accept this epistle as a loving letter to a church.

Contents.—Joy is expressed that the children of the church walk in the truth. In the truth they have known the Apostle loves them,⁴³ and exhorts them to continue in the life of love.⁴⁴ For many deceivers have gone out who deny Christ's incarnation. Neither their teaching nor they are to be received, that evil may be avoided.⁴⁵ Soon John expects to see the believers face to face.⁴⁶

Summary.—What a joy it is when believers walk in the life of truth, which is love, and avoid those who deny that the Son of God has become man.

* Compare 5 and 1 John 2. 7; 6 and 1 John 5. 3; 7 and 1 John 2. 18; 4. 1 ff. 12 and 1 John 1. 4.

† Compare the manner in which John sends greetings in a personal letter.—3 John 14.

⁴⁰ 1 Pet. 5. 1.

⁴¹ cp. 1 Pet. 5. 13.

⁴² v. 13.

⁴³ 1, 2.

⁴⁴ 3-6.

⁴⁵ 7-11.

⁴⁶ 12, 13.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The joy of a teacher is the life of godly love of those whom he has taught.
2. Heretics, who deny the Son of God, must not be associated with.
3. He who is friendly with heretics is partaker of their evil deeds.

III JOHN.

III John.—The likeness of this letter to the other two and to the Gospel * mark it as John's. There is also the same spirit of gentleness to the faithful, and severity against sin and error. The time is shortly after the second epistle, which is referred to.⁴⁷ The letter is sent to Gaius, a member of the church addressed in the second letter. As the name Gaius is a common one no locality can be fixed.⁴⁸ Gaius is asked to receive Demetrius,⁴⁹ who is bearing this letter. Its purpose is to commend Gaius for receiving the brethren, former messengers of the apostle,⁵⁰ and to warn against Diotrephes, who is forbidding this reception and doing evil.⁵¹ John expects to come soon.⁵²

⁴⁷ 9.⁴⁸ cp. Acts 19.
²⁹; 20. 4.
Rom. 16. 23.
1 Cor. 1. 14.
⁴⁹ 12.⁵⁰ 1-8.⁵¹ 9-11.
⁵² 13, 14.

The importance of this epistle is in showing us one of the early letters of introduction given to traveling Christians, to put before us the hospitality and love of Christians, and to exhibit an unruly, self-willed elder, who interferes with the messengers of the apostles and casts out those that hold to apostolic truth and authority. Perhaps Diotrephes was a false teacher.⁵³

⁵³ ver. 11;
2 John 9 ff

Summary.—The authority of truth must prevail. No one is lord of a church. Only the word of truth is king. In the truth Christians show hospitality and love to each other.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Error and unruliness were ever in the Church.
2. The apostolic word must rule a congregation.
3. No pastor is lord of the flock.
4. Christians show hospitality and love.

* Ver. 1 and 2 John 1; ver. 3 and 2 John 4; ver. 5 and 1 John 2. 29; 3. 10 ff.; ver. 12 and John 21. 24; 19. 35; ver. 13 and 2 John 12 ff.

JUDE.

Jude.—The writer of this epistle is not Jude the apostle (Lebbaeus), but Jude the brother of James and Jesus.⁵⁴ Like James⁵⁵ he calls himself humbly a servant of Jesus; for his earthly relation to Christ was not to be marked.⁵⁶ When Jude calls himself “brother of James,” it is because James was a pillar of the church at Jerusalem, and Jude is writing to Jewish Christians. This appears from the close similarity to II Peter.* The same people there addressed are here had in view. For while the teaching of the apostles †⁵⁷ is referred to, and errors they warned against ‡⁵⁸ rejected, yet also, as to those who know, Old Testament facts are recalled.⁵⁹ Even incidents from Jewish apocryphal § books are mentioned. || This does not impair the character of Jude, for the apocryphal books contained true elements of history, and the New Testament in other places reports matters not in the Old Testament. ¶ The style of Jude is picturesque, vigorous, fairly correct Greek. Its dependence upon II Peter, and the reference to the destruction of Jerusalem,⁶⁰ make it probable that it was written about 75 A. D.

Contending for the Faith.—The errorists feared by Peter have come. They deny Christ,⁶¹ speak evil of angels, are unruly, lascivious, arrogant of speech, avaricious, mockers and corrupters.⁶² Their coming has been foretold.⁶³

Over against them the believers should contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.⁶⁴ After a greeting⁶⁵ the seducers are warned against.⁶⁶ They shall be punished as once those were who were

* Compare, *e. g.*, ver. 6 and 2 Pet. 2. 4; ver. 7 and 2 Pet. 2. 6; ver. 12 and 2 Pet. 2. 17.

† Compare, *e. g.*, 2 Thess. 2. 12.

‡ Rom. 6. 1, 15; 1 Cor. 6. 12. (“Turning the grace of God into lasciviousness.”)

§ Apocrypha are books not received among the inspired original records.

|| The story of Michael (9) is from “The assumption of Moses;” ver. 6, 14, 15, refer to “The Book of Enoch.”

¶ That Moses was taught in Egyptian wisdom (Acts 7. 22), that Saul reigned forty years (Acts 13. 21), that the Egyptian magicians, who withstood Moses, were called Jannes and Jambres (2 Tim. 3. 8).

delivered from Egypt, and yet believed not; as the wicked angels, as Sodom and Gomorrah.⁶⁷ They speak evil of angels, though even ⁶⁷ 5-7. Michael only dared to ask God to rebuke Satan.⁶⁸ Like Cain, Balaam ⁶⁸ 8-10. and Core they corrupt and are rebellious. Worthless, wicked men, they have been prophesied by Enoch and the apostles.⁶⁹ But the ⁶⁹ 12-19. believers are to be built up in faith and love, and to save whom they can. The Lord will keep them and present them faultless. To Him belong all glory and majesty.⁷⁰ ⁷⁰ 20-25.

Summary.—The faith is unchangeable. It must be kept against all deniers of Christ, and against all unholiness.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Faith does not alter with the times.
2. The heretics who deny Christ and heavenly power are full of wickedness.
3. All false teaching has been warned against by God's prophets.

REVELATION.

CHAPTER XX.

Its Style and Authorship.—In this book we find a style so Hebrew, that at times it seems as though Greek was poorly grasped by its writer. Revelation almost has a grammar of its own. But its peculiarity is really due not merely to the influence of Hebrew prophets. The laws of language are broken, because all human speech is inadequate to express fully what is communicated. The plane of heavenly truth is wonderful, the imagery is magnificent, the visions so mighty and overpowering, that language cannot stand the strain, but still the reality of what is seen possesses the soul. Style and grammar are forgotten. The writer is John. He is expressly named,¹ and claims to give a true report of revelations received.² The same exclusive Johannine expression “Word”³ occurs in 19:13. Christ is often called the Lamb as in the Gospel.⁴ He, as in the Gospel, is designated, Life (liveth forever),⁵ and Light,⁶ and His love is affirmed.⁷ The impress of John is clearly found, despite the great difference of style. But it must be marked, that John writes not for himself, but as the witness of God and Christ.⁸ He is especially bidden to write the whole and even details of what he heard and saw.⁹ Only once is he forbidden to write what he heard.¹⁰ In an ecstasy does John write. The seeing and hearing are visions.¹¹ The very words of Christ are given.¹² Therefore this book is a direct revelation.¹³ a book of immediately inspired prophecy peculiarly under God’s protection.¹⁴

The Seven Churches.—It was first sent to *seven congregations*, selected to show certain definite conditions of Christian life.¹⁵ Each church received its letter from Jesus, but each revelation is intended for all churches.¹⁶ All servants of Christ are to have this book as a holy treasure¹⁷ until Christ returns.¹⁸ It is to be diligently and wisely used.¹⁹

Date.—According to all ancient testimony John wrote this book, when banished by the Emperor Domitian to Patmos, about 95 A. D.

Such banishments were then common. The seven heads of the beast ²⁰ ²⁰ 13. 1; 17. 8 dare not be referred to Roman emperors so as to put Revelation in the reign of Nero. The condition of the churches, the loss of the first love in some, the errors and sins reproached, are not compatible with so early a date. The organization is late, for already one bishop is arising ("the angel of the church"). The expression "Lord's day" ²¹ ²¹ 1. 10. is best understood after the Sabbath had largely passed away. Jerusalem must have been destroyed, and the hope of gaining Jews, which Paul never gave up, have been abandoned, when they are spoken of as "the synagogue of Satan." ²² ²² 2. 9; 3. 9.

Its Aim.—The aim of the Revelation is to show what must shortly come to pass.²³ To do this John is to write the things which ²³ 1. 1. are, and the things which shall be hereafter.²⁴ Revelation is not a his- ²⁴ 1. 19. tory that is to be unfolded, but a series of visions. They have been partially fulfilled, but the greater part is to come to pass before Christ's return. The future is spoken of as "shortly," partly because the predictions soon began to be fulfilled, partly according to divine counting.²⁵ ²⁵ cp. 2 Pet. 3. 8. The future is outlined not to satisfy curiosity, but to comfort the saints in their trials, and to give them assurance of the Church triumphant.

First, John sees and tells *what is*,²⁶ and then, *what shall be hereafter*.²⁷ ²⁶ 1. 10—
²⁷ 3. 22.
There appears a series of visions. They are not to be considered as suc- ²⁷ 4. 1—22.9. cessive. Only within each vision is succession marked. The various pictures show different sides of conditions existing at the same time. The last, the seventh part, is never fully shown. Mostly only announcements and glimpses of heavenly glory appear, for the last part means the final coming of Christ, and is fulfilled in the scenes of glory at the close. Between the sixth and seventh parts are intervening explanatory scenes.

What is:—The *first vision*. After a mighty greeting from the risen, living Lord, to the saints, the royal priesthood, through John,²⁸ ²⁸ 1. 1-9 Christ appears among His churches, the First and Last, the human-divine royal Priest, clad in majesty of eternal, mighty life and holiness. He has the sword of His word to judge.²⁹ To the seven ²⁹ 10-20. congregations at Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea He sends messages, that He knows them well,

to warn them against sin, to encourage them in the truth, that they
 30 2. 1—3. 22. may escape judgment and receive life eternal.³⁰

31 4. 1—8. 1. **What shall be Hereafter**, in seven visions. *First vision*.³¹
 John is in heaven, sees the throne of God, and the mighty Creator
 32 4. worshipped by the spirits of life and by men.³² In God's hand is the
 book of His will, sealed by seven seals. Only the Lamb that is slain,
 33 5. the Lion of Judah, is worthy to open it.³³ By His power the seals
 reveal (1) the victory of God's word, (2) bloody wars, (3) famines, (4)
 partial epidemics, (5) bloody persecutions of the believers, (6) great
 34 6. upheavals of nature.³⁴ Two scenes intervene, that show who shall be
 35 7. 1-8. saved in these times: (1) 144,000 from Israel sealed by God's angel,³⁵
 36 9-17. (2) many from all nations, who died in the great persecution.³⁶ The
 37 8. 1. seventh seal brings silence.³⁷

After this silence of expectancy the *second vision* appears.³⁸ The
 38 2—
 39 11. 19.
 39 8. 2-5. cries of the saints go up as incense³⁹ Seven trumpets of judgment
 are heard. As the first four sound, a part of nature is injured.⁴⁰ The
 40 6-12. fifth and sixth bring terrible woes upon men, yet do they not repent.⁴¹
 41 13—
 9. 21. Again two scenes intervene: first, a little book, part of God's truth
 sealed up, is eaten by John. It is sweet as God's message, but bitter
 to the flesh as judgment.⁴² Second, the two great witnesses of truth
 42 10. are slain by antichrist, but rise again.⁴³ The seventh trumpet unveils
 43 11. 1-14. the majesty of God's power, and grants a glimpse into His eternal
 44 15-19. temple.⁴⁴

The *third vision*⁴⁵ shows the Church as the woman rescued and
 45 12. 1—
 14. 20.
 46 12. 1, 2. remaining in the wilderness.⁴⁶ Against her Satan, the old Dragon,
 rises,⁴⁷ and the beast of the sea, the great world power,⁴⁸ and the beast
 47 3-17.
 48 13. 1-10. of the earth, the false prophet, the messenger of the false world-
 religion.⁴⁹ Over against this conflict is seen the beginning of triumph.
 49 11 18. The Lamb and His company are in heaven,⁵⁰ and three angels pro-
 50 14. 1-5. nounce the judgments still to come.⁵¹ The saints that die in the
 51 6-11. trials are blessed.⁵² At last shall come the harvest to cut down the
 52 12, 13. wicked, and the vintage of God's wrath upon the sinners.⁵³
 53 14-20.

The *fourth vision*,⁵⁴ after a song of praise of God's true judg-
 54 15. 1—
 16. 21. ments,⁵⁵ unfolds the pouring out of seven vials of God's wrath like
 55 15. the plagues of Egypt. The earth, sea, rivers, and the sun are touched.

Darkness comes, and unclean spirits of the devil.⁵⁶ Then intervenes the gathering of the kings of the earth to final battle.⁵⁷ The seventh vial points to the end.⁵⁸

The *fifth vision*⁵⁹ shows the fall of Babylon, the wicked world-city,⁶⁰ describes her glory, power and destruction.⁶¹ For this judgment God is praised in heaven,⁶² and blessing pronounced upon those coming to the marriage supper of the Lamb.⁶³

The *sixth vision*⁶⁴ unveils the coming of Jesus to overthrow Satan.⁶⁵ Then Christ reigns a thousand years, and there comes the final judgment, and the last resurrection,⁶⁶ when a new heaven and a new earth arise.⁶⁷

The *seventh vision*⁶⁸ brings the *heavenly Jerusalem*. All the glory of life is seen. Eternity has begun. Therefore, upon Christ's promise, and with this hope, the Church prays: "Even so come, Lord Jesus!"

Summary.—Marvellous are these visions, which show that God's judgments will come to destroy Satan and the power of the world in outward rule and false religion. The saints, though persecuted, shall triumph. Christ is King. The end is, blessing with Him. These are the great lessons. Much of the detail is still hidden. But for this cause the great consolation of this hope dare not be neglected, nor this revelation forgotten. It has patience and comfort for the saints.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The future belongs finally to Christ and the Church.
2. The great enemy is still Satan.
3. Him the power of the world and its history serves.
4. He has a mighty false religion, against the simplicity of the faith of Christ.
5. The saints must suffer and be persecuted toward the end.
6. The world will not glide into happiness. It will be judged.
7. Christ will reign and Satan will be conquered.
8. The most glorious sights, joys and gifts will eternity have.
9. But the light of heavenly Jerusalem, its chiefest joy, is the Lamb.
10. The Church must ever pray: Come, Lord Jesus!

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER XXI.

1. **The Old Testament** is the book of preparation for Christ, and contains God's dealings with Israel, the chosen race. In the history of God's kingdom it describes also how men received these dealings. Some followed God's leading. But many were wicked and their words and actions are truly reported as a warning. This truthfulness, which characterizes the Scriptures, also reports the sins of believers. The divine Spirit of Truth veils nothing.

New Testament References to the Old Testament.—

¹ Luke 16. 29ff Jesus refers to the Old Testament as God's saving revelation,¹ and confirms His teachings² and life by its prophecy.³ Peter, following Christ, appeals to its announcement⁴ of the great Prophet,⁵ and His suffering and glory.⁶ Paul likewise proves his teaching of Jesus by Moses and the prophets.⁷ He sees in individual incidents⁸ foreshadowings of Christ and Christian truth for our learning.⁹ * The Gospel itself is promised afore,¹⁰ and all Scriptures of the Old Testament were given by God's inspiration for our blessing.¹¹ The epistle to the Hebrews unfolds the prophetic meaning of Old Testament law and ceremonies. The Apocalypse is filled with pictures and emblems of the prophets. The whole New Testament, and after it the early Church, saw mainly the prophetic side of the Old Testament. It was used as a Christian book. Some did not understand the historical difference between shadow and substance, prophecy and fulfillment. But they kept the religious truth of the Old Testament, which is lost when it is only regarded as human history apart from Christ.

* Compare opening paragraphs to New Testament.

2. **The Pentateuch**¹² is the name of the first five books of the Bible. They form one whole and are Israel's law. One in chronology and aim, they tell of the beginnings of all things to lead to the forming of Israel.¹³ As it becomes a nation it migrates.¹⁴ God by covenant shapes and gives it laws as a priestly nation,¹⁵ keeps it despite its sins in its wanderings,¹⁶ until before the entrance into the land of promise Moses repeats the substance of the law in mighty orations.¹⁷

¹² *i. e.*, the five fold book.

¹³ Genesis.
¹⁴ Exodus.
¹⁵ Leviticus.

¹⁶ Numbers.

¹⁷ Deuteronomy.

Its Style.—In the whole Pentateuch simple words and pictures, and a direct, childlike style, are interwoven with the more stereotype, chronological, genealogical style of a recorder. But these differences, while they may point to various traditions and records which were combined, bear the final impress of one human mind and one divine Spirit.*

Its Authorship.—The human writer of the substance of the Pentateuch was Moses. It is called the book of the law of Moses,¹⁸ or only the book of Moses.¹⁹ Moses is said to have written "this law."²⁰ †

¹⁸ Josh. 8. 31;
2 Kings 14. 6.
Neh. 8. 1.
¹⁹ 2 Chron. 25.
4; 35. 12;
Ezra 6. 18.
Neh. 13. 1.
²⁰ Deut. 31. 9,
24.

*The Pentateuch is not the artificial product of late combination, though there may have been later additions. Many seeming contradictions are only apparent, and repetitions are the result of the fulsome Hebrew style. The use of the two divine names *God* (Hebrew *Elohim*), and *Lord* (Hebrew *Jahve*) does not, together with the other differences, point to various sources. It only marks different aspects of God. *Elohim* mostly emphasizes power, majesty; *Jahve*, fidelity unchangeableness. Sometimes those fundamental meanings were forgotten, but this does not invalidate their general difference.

† "This law" may have a restricted meaning, but nothing forbids its extension to the whole law. The other Old Testament books rather demand it. Joshua frequently and clearly refers to Moses' law, as written in the book of the law.¹ The book of Judges² looks back to Moses as transmitting God's commandments. The books of Samuel not only contain verbal reminiscences of the Pentateuch,³ but presuppose the tabernacle, the ark, the laws. The books of Kings, Ezra, Nehemiah, the Chronicles are also full of references to Moses' law.⁴ These later books contain more references because Israel consciously returns to the law. The Psalms everywhere rest on the law.⁵ The prophets likewise do not show the growth of the law, but

¹ 1. 7, 8; 8. 31,
34; 23. 6.
² 1. 20; 3. 4.

³ *e. g.*, cp. 1. Sam. 15. 29 with Num. 23. 19; 1 Sam. 8. 5 with Deut. 17. 14; 2 Sam. 7. 22-24, with Deut. 3. 24; 4. 35; 32. 39; 9. 26; 26. 18.

⁴ 1 Kings 2. 3; 6. 12 ff.; 9. 4, etc.; 2 Kings 16. 15, etc.; Ezra 6. 9; 7; Neh. 8. 1; 9. 5 ff.; 1 Chron. 22. 13; 2 Chron. 23. 18, etc.

⁵ *cf.* Ps. 1; 19; 40. 8; 119.

Summary.—The Bible is the great history of God's kingdom. The Old Testament tells of its beginnings. It looks to Christ. The dealings of God with Israel are told in it. His Spirit caused the writers truthfully to tell the sins as well as the virtues of the people. He moved them as the word of hope was recorded. Through Him is kept the supernatural side of a history and truth, which is among men but is from above. The end of all is Christ hoped for.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The Bible is the history of God's kingdom.
2. The Old Testament tells of the beginnings of the kingdom.
3. It is completely true.
4. It is the saving revelation of hope.
5. Christ is the end and aim of the Old Testament.

its existence ⁶ In short the whole literature of Israel rests upon and affirms the law as the foundation and not the end of its history, and Moses as its author. This was always the judgment of the Jews. Christ also confirms it.⁷ This whole judgment of inspired history cannot be overthrown by internal difficulties in the Pentateuch. Those who reject Moses as author of the Pentateuch are mostly influenced by the denial of God's direct revelation to Israel. To them all is natural, nothing supernatural.

⁶ Is. 1. 2-4 with Deut. 32; 5. 9 ff. with Lev. 26; 3. 9 with Gen. 19. 15; 11. 5, 16 with Ex. 14; 24. 18 with Gen. 7. 11; Jer. 5. 19 with Deut. 29, 24 ff.; 11. 1 ff. with Deut. 4. 20; 32. 18 with Ex. 20. 6. etc.; Ezek. 20. 5 with Ex. 3. 8; 4. 31; 6. 8; Deut. 4. 34; 22. 26 with Lev. 10. 10; 22. 2 ff.; 44. 20 with Lev. 21. 5; Hosea 2. 17 with Ex. 23. 13; 4. 10 with Lev. 26. 26; Joel 2. 3 with Gen. 13. 10; 2. 2 with Ex. 10. 14; Amos 2. 4; 2. 7 with Ex. 23. 3; Lev. 20. 3; Deut. 16. 19; 2. 8 with Ex. 22. 26, etc.; Obad. 1-19 with Num. 24. 18, 19; Micah 6. 1 ff. with Deut. 32. 1 ff.; Nahum 1. 2 with Ex. 20. 5; 1. 3 with Ex. 34. 6, 7; Num. 14. 7. 18; Hab. 3. 3 with Deut. 33. 2.

⁷ Cp. Matt. 19. 7; 22. 24; Mark 12. 26; Luke 5. 14; 20. 37; 24. 44; John 1. 17; 7. 19, 23.

GENESIS.

CHAPTER XXII.

Genesis, the book of beginnings or "generations," ¹ introduces us to God, the Creator of all things. We see God in a series of pictures, as He makes this world according to the plan of unfolding from lower to higher. In this work He is ever present through His word and power.² On man He imprints His own image,³ places him in Eden⁴ and gives him his helpmeet.⁵ But the freedom of choice, meant to be exercised in childlike obedience, becomes unfreedom in sin as man falls by Satan's temptation.⁶ Sin is present and must have its wages;⁷ yet the promise of deliverance is given,⁸ through the woman's seed. In the working out of this promise, to be finally realized only in Christ, two lines of men arise. The one follows⁹ Cain, the murderer,¹⁰ in sin through Lamech, the first, fierce poet of the sword and war.¹¹ The other men, descendants of Seth, are the men of faith and hope.¹²

¹ 2. 4; 5. 1;
10. 1;
11. 10;
25. 12, 19;
36. 1; 37. 2.

² 1.
³ 1. 26.
⁴ 2. 8.
⁵ 2. 18.

⁶ 3.
⁷ 3. 14 ff.
⁸ 3. 15.

⁹ 4. 16 ff.

¹⁰ 4.

¹¹ 4. 23 ff.

¹² 5.

The Progress of Human History.—Even these, the sons of God, are corrupted by the Cainites,¹³ who, though they invent the beginnings of music and the arts,¹⁴ finally compel God to the destruction by the flood.¹⁵ All are lost, except Noah, the man of righteousness, and his family.¹⁶ Noah and his sons form the new beginning of mankind under a covenant of long-suffering, waiting mercy.¹⁷ From them the great divisions of men and nations descend, Japheth being the father of the Aryan tribes; Ham, the wicked and cursed mocker,¹⁸ of the African people; Shem, of the Semitic branch.¹⁹ These divisions became marked and men are separated by the confusion of tongues at Babel,²⁰ where God destroys the beginning of world-power to preserve the germ of the coming race.

¹³ 6.
¹⁴ 4. 20,
¹⁵ 6, 7.
¹⁶ 7, 8.
¹⁷ 9.
¹⁸ 9. 20 ff.
¹⁹ 10.
²⁰ 11. 1 ff.

This germ is unfolded in the line of Shem. Through Terah to Abram,²¹ *Israel begins*. Its history tells how God prepares salvation for men.

²¹ 11. 27.

The Patriarchs.—With Abram the history of salvation in the patriarchal period arises. Abram, called and responding in faith,²² goes to the new land of promise. He is kept in distant Egypt,²³ as his people after him shall be.²⁴ For the sake of peace he surrenders his right to Lot,²⁵ conquers the kings of the world,²⁶ and receives blessing from the King of righteousness and peace, whom Melchizedek, of Salem, represents and symbolizes.²⁷ God, upon Abram's faith, makes the covenant of promise to Abram's seed,²⁸ which is not fulfilled in Ishmael, the son of the bond-maid.²⁹ Later it is sealed by circumcision.³⁰ *Abram*, high father of faith, becomes *Abraham*,³¹ father of the multitude. He is the man of prayer and is heard.³² But sin is too mighty in Sodom and it must fall, that sin may not again spread too widely.³³ Abraham, the patriarch of believing activity, is tempted, and through unbelieving fear falls,³⁴ but is afterward firm in casting out at God's command the unbelieving Ishmael.³⁵ Stronger still is Abraham in his readiness to offer up his beloved son Isaac.³⁶ This act, foreshadowing God's greater gift of His son,³⁷ marks Isaac as the patriarch of quiet hope.³⁸ Rescued by God's intervention,³⁹ he lives a still life, comforted by Rebekah's love after the loss of his mother.⁴⁰ He is a picture, not only of hoping faith, but of the gentle helper to come.

In his younger son, *Jacob*, there comes the man of strong hope, but also of shrewd activity.⁴¹ Ever ready to gain eternal things by human tricks, he is a type of Israel in its weakness as well as in its noblest desire. Deceiving his father and brother,⁴² he must suffer flight.⁴³ God promises to be with him,⁴⁴ and he pledges gifts to God. He is deceived in obtaining Leah as his wife.⁴⁵ But finally Rachel, whom he loves, is given him too.⁴⁶ Through these wives and their maids, Jacob becomes the father of twelve sons, from whom descend the tribes of Israel.⁴⁷ At last when God prevails over him, and he submits, he is named Israel,⁴⁸ the prince of God. At peace with God, reconciliation with his brother follows.⁴⁹

Joseph.—The beginning of Israel's trial and the way to its national existence lies, however, through the picturesque and romantic life of Joseph. Unusually beloved by his father,⁵⁰ he becomes the object of envy to his brethren because of his exemplary life, the

father's preference and his own high dreams of power.⁵¹ Envy seeks to destroy him,⁵² but affection would save him.⁵³ Envy conquers and sells him as a slave.⁵⁴ This Joseph, rejected by his brethren, fore-shadows a greater one, hated and rejected. The sold slave receives high place.⁵⁵ Temptation seeks him,⁵⁶ but he conquers, only to be imprisoned by lying, lustful hate.⁵⁷ In prison God raises up friends for him.⁵⁸ Dreams, which he interprets,⁵⁹ at last lead him to Pharaoh's presence.⁶⁰ There he interprets Pharaoh's dreams so clearly and advises so prudently,⁶¹ that he is made co-regent.⁶² In this position he receives his brethren, tries them, saves them,⁶³ and in loving affection sends for his old father.⁶⁴ To Egypt Jacob comes and dwells;⁶⁵ there he dies, with many prophetic blessings for his sons,⁶⁶ seeing the hope to come (the prince of peace) in Judah.⁶⁷ In Egypt Israel prospers, until Joseph dies.⁶⁸

Summary—From God, the Creator, is the beginning. His works are good. Man mars them by the disobedience of sin. In it he follows Satan's temptation. Through Satan, the murderer from the beginning, envious murder enters the world, and man's culture is tainted with sin's selfishness. Man must be destroyed when his wickedness becomes too great. He must be scattered when he puts his power and kingdom against God's.

But from the woman, who fell first, God will bring the deliverer. He promises mercy after punishment. He prepares salvation by selecting a man (Abraham), and through him a people (Israel), and out of it a tribe (Judah). Through this people shall the world be blessed in Christ Jesus.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God maketh all things by His word.
2. God's works are good.
3. Satan brought temptation to sin.
4. By man's disobedience sin entered the world.
5. Sin tainted everything and brought death.
6. God promised help through the woman's seed.
7. He gives peace after the flood.
8. Blessing shall come to men through Israel.
9. The blessing of Israel is Christ.

EXODUS.

CHAPTER XXIII.

- Israel in Egypt.**—In Egypt Israel grows in numbers,¹ but Joseph's services are forgotten,² and a new dynasty arises to whom the foreign shepherds are an abomination.³ They are oppressed by hard service as royal slaves.⁴ As they still increase, their newly born sons are ordered to be killed.⁵ Some are secretly rescued.⁶
- Moses.**—Among those saved is Moses,⁷ who through God's providence is adopted and educated by Pharaoh's daughter.⁸ Blood and faith become stronger in Moses than education and power.⁹ Impatient anger leads to premature action,¹⁰ and Moses must flee.¹¹ In the desert's forty years' stillness, where he finds a home and wife,¹² all plans are abandoned, until God calls him strongly¹³ to deliver Israel. The message of deliverance is to rest on God's name of unchangeable fidelity, Jehovah.¹⁴
- Moses Before Pharaoh.**—Equipped with this message and with accrediting signs,¹⁵ and in his wavering supported by his brother Aaron as spokesman,¹⁶ Moses appears to his people.¹⁷ Then he boldly stands before Pharaoh.¹⁸ But Pharaoh makes Israel's bondage harder,¹⁹ yet God renews the promise of deliverance²⁰ through Moses, a true descendant of Israel.²¹ With his God-given signs Moses now approaches Pharaoh, but Pharaoh's magicians imitate the signs.²² A mighty struggle with Pharaoh ensues. By nine powerful miracles Moses shows the power of God over Egypt's false gods; and Pharaoh's claim of power, independent of God, is shown to be futile.²³ Still Pharaoh hardens his heart, and God hardens him, and in him shows his mighty judgment.²⁴ With a last powerful act God kills Egypt's first-born, that they may let His first-born son of choice go.²⁵ For a time Pharaoh relents. Moses and his people are bidden to go. They prepare in the night, gird

up their clothes, put on their sandals, and carry the unleavened bread, the sign of purity. They are rescued from God's slaying angel by the blood of a lamb. The angel's passing over typifies a great, final redemption, thought of in the yearly Passover.²⁶ 26 12. 1 ff.

Leaving Egypt.—Six hundred thousand men, without counting the women and children, are gathered and march from Rameses to Succoth, to Etham.²⁷ Their guide is God's revealing and concealing cloud of presence by day, which is kindled, figuratively, by the fire of His holiness by night.²⁸ It leads them southward along the Red Sea. As they approach its northern end and fear to be hemmed in by the pursuing Egyptians, a north wind, driving back the waves, makes a path through the sea, and they pass over. The Egyptians, long anxious to attack, but kept back by the darkness of the cloud, which to Israel was light, rush into the Red Sea after Israel. But the wind ceases, the waves of the sea return, it storms, lightning flashes; and all of Pharaoh's hosts are destroyed.²⁹ On the farther shore Moses and the children of Israel join in a hymn of triumphant deliverance.³⁰ 27 12. 37 ff.
28 14. 19 ff.
29 14. 23 ff.
30 15.

On Toward Sinai.—The emigrants are now on the way to Mount Sinai. In their passage through the wilderness of Shur, the bitterness of Marah's spring³¹ is sweetened by God's direction, even though they ungratefully murmur in impatience. God grants rest at Elim's waters and under its palms.³² Onward again the journey leads through the desert of Sin, where God provides manna as bread,³³ and upon new complaint of Israel sends quails.³⁴ For the gathering of manna the Sabbath day is excepted, yet some in disobedience seek it on the Sabbath.³⁵ A further advance leads to Rephidim,³⁶ where Israel's discontent grows to chiding and strife in which Moses is almost stoned, because water is not provided at once. Enemies now appear in the Amalekites.³⁷ They are conquered by the assistance of Moses' prayer, in which Aaron and Hur support him. As in prayer Moses is not to be alone, so in the growing administration of justice he follows the wise counsel of Jethro, his father-in-law, who brings Moses' wife to him; and judges are appointed for the thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.³⁸ 31 15. 23.
32 15. 27.
33 16. 1 ff.
34 16. 12 ff.
35 16. 22 ff.
36 17. 1 ff.
37 17. 8 ff.
38 18.

The Law.—The time comes for the solemn preparation of the giving of the law at Sinai. Israel sanctifies itself as a holy nation before the mighty revelation of God's majestic holiness.³⁹ This speaks forth in the *Ten Fundamental Commandments*.⁴⁰ They form the foundation of the *Book of the Covenant*,⁴¹ with its necessary laws of right in Israel. The first laws, after idolatry is forbidden,⁴² command what each owes his neighbor. Servants are to be guaranteed their right of freedom,⁴³ and there is to be no servitude forever, unless by choice. This freedom of life is further guarded by punishing all harm inflicted on life.⁴⁴ Next to life, property of every kind is safeguarded.⁴⁵ All uncleanness is severely forbidden.⁴⁶ The law is to be the doing of mercy toward strangers, widows, orphans and the poor,⁴⁷ combined with reverence toward the rulers⁴⁸ and God, to whom the first fruits are to be offered.⁴⁹ Justice and charity are to be kept;⁵⁰ the day of rest of every week, and the seventh year's rest, are to be observed and granted to all.⁵¹ Thus the duty toward others leads to the duty due God.⁵² His covenant is sealed and confirmed by solemn sacrifice.⁵³

The Sanctuary.—Upon this covenant God begins to dwell in special presence⁵⁴ among Israel, and gives direction for His sanctuary.⁵⁵ It is to contain the ark of the covenant,⁵⁶ overshadowed by the cherubim, to show that God's holy testimony is covered by His mercy. Of next importance is the altar of shewbread,⁵⁷ which betokens that all gifts come from God, and after it the golden candlestick of constant, holy light. The sanctuary, as the tabernacle of revelation was to have the carefully separated parts, The Holiest, The Holy, The Court⁵⁸ with its altar of burnt-offering.⁵⁹ The holy light was to have holy oil,⁶⁰ and holy men were to be selected and consecrated as priests.⁶¹

Daily are the services of burnt-, meat- and drink-offerings; and incense is constantly to ascend, picturing unceasing prayer.⁶² Directions are given the priests for their work.⁶³ The people, not priests, are to redeem themselves from the claim of service, which they all owed God.⁶⁴ Besides the priests, two great workmen are selected and guided in their skill by God's Spirit.⁶⁵ The

Sabbath law, even in view of the work of the sanctuary, is again enforced.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ 31. 12 ff.

Israel's Idolatry.—Despite God's holy law and merciful presence Israel sins. It breaks the covenant by idolatry.⁶⁷ God's just wrath is averted by Moses' mediation,⁶⁸ foreshadowing a greater mediator, and God reveals Himself as long-suffering. New tables of the law are given,⁶⁹ and God's holiness shines in Moses' face, so that Israel cannot behold him.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ 32. 1 ff.

⁶⁸ 32. 30 ff.

⁶⁹ 34. 1 ff.

⁷⁰ 34. 29 ff.

The Tabernacle Completed.—The work of preparing the tabernacle is resumed. The time of work is determined, the material collected and recounted, the making of the tabernacle and all its equipments begun.⁷¹ When all is completed Moses inspects and blesses it.⁷² Jehovah gives the final directions, and enters into His sanctuary with His holy, but merciful presence.⁷³

⁷¹ 35-39.

⁷² 39. 32 ff.

⁷³ 40.

Summary.—God leads Israel from bondage, and by Him it is made a people. It is sanctified by God's deliverance, His covenant, His sanctuary and worship. Its fundamental law is holy love to God and man. But in its wanderings, a type of the Christian's pilgrimage, it is impatient, ungrateful, unbelieving, idolatrous, and is kept for the future only by God's long-suffering mercy.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God is the true deliverer.
2. He prepares a people to be holy.
3. His law is holy love.
4. Worship must lead to holiness.
5. The sin of unbelief is the source of all sins against holiness.
6. God's long-suffering goodness seeks the sinner's salvation.

LEVITICUS.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Sacrifices.—The nation selected to be holy is marked by the priestly law for a priestly people. This law begins with the sacrifices; for to bring these is the priest's first duty. Five different sacrifices are to be distinguished: (C. 1) *Burnt-offerings*, in which the burning up by fire embraces the main idea of all sacrifices, viz.: the entire giving up to God. (C. 2) *Meat-offerings*, in which the fruits of nature are acknowledged before Him who gave them. (C. 3) *Peace-offerings*, as expressions of a grateful, satisfied soul. (C. 4) *Sin-offerings*, which portray the expiation and removal of sin. (C. 5) *Trespass-offerings*, in which the central thought is satisfaction for wrong. Rightly to bring these sacrifices,¹ the priest must learn to know how to use the trespass-offering;² how to direct the peace-offering,³ as a gift of the rejoicing,⁴ the fulfillment of a vow or as a free-will gift.⁵ In these sacrifices there shall be a portion for the priest.⁶

The Priests.—For their work the priests must be consecrated. The right sacrifices must be offered by the properly authorized priests. They, who act as mediators between the holy God and sinful man, must be separated by cleansing. They are to be holy, robed in spotless garments, and anointed with oil as receiving divine unction.⁷ But sacrifices must accompany the induction of the priest,⁸ not only to mark their rendering themselves up to God's service, but also to cleanse them wholly in every member and with every garment. The high priest, as God's oracle, is to wear the breast-plate with twelve stones, to represent the interceding heart on which he is to bear all Israel. His bright Urim and Thummim (light and right) is given him, that God through it may indicate His will.⁹ As thus directed, Moses consecrated Aaron and his sons. And when Aaron, after atonement for himself and the people, in priestly duty completes the sacrifices

by blessing,¹⁰ God Himself answers by the fire of His glorious, holy presence.¹¹ This holy fire is to kindle all sacrifices. But in disobedience Nadab and Abihu bring strange fire.¹² God's holy zeal devours them, that He alone may be glorified. Again, the priests are instructed to mark carefully the difference between holy and unholy, clean and unclean, and to keep themselves from wine, when they serve, so that all the types may clearly signify the holy lesson to be taught.¹³

10 9. 8 ff.

11 9. 24 ff.

12 10. 1 ff.

13 10. 8 ff.

The Clean and Unclean.—But all Israel is to learn the lesson of cleanness of heart by the *law of clean and unclean* in outward, visible life. Clean and unclean food,¹⁴ sickness, and, above all, the naturally incurable leprosy,¹⁵ show the deep corruption, infection and wretchedness of sin which even defiles things¹⁶ and needs God's purifying. The more to impress these laws and to do away with uncleanness, an annual day of atonement is instituted. On it, with duly significant ritual,¹⁷ the high priest brings sacrifices for himself, as an unholy mediator, and then offers for the people the blood, which is accepted at God's mercy-seat and is also borne away by the scape-goat, to point to the final redemption and total removal of sin by the perfect High-priest, who is also the complete Sacrifice.¹⁸

15 13, 14. 1 ff

16 14. 33 ff.

17 16.

18 cp. Heb. 7
10.

Holiness in Life.—The laws of purification are followed by the *law of holiness* for the whole life. The life that has been purified must be kept holy. This is again first illustrated in nature and applied to Israel as a people. All of Israel's law is national before it is personal, for it is with the nation that God deals, and with the individual through the nation. In the sacrifices to be brought, whatever is unholy must be avoided, and in the meat that is eaten, the blood, sacred by its bearing life, must be shunned.¹⁹ All sacrifice is to be sanctified in the sanctuary, that Israel may not serve demons.²⁰ Beside food, life in matrimony²¹ is to be holy, and every uncleanness, shame and unnatural abomination is to be avoided. For such sin the land spued out the unholy Canaanites. In all relations toward God and man, God's holy law is to be kept, the order of unmixed purity is to be observed symbolically in nature, and really in the moral world. In the daily life with Israelites and strangers, mercy, honesty and justice are to prevail.²²

19 17. 1 ff.

20 17. 7 ff.

21 18.

22 19.

Punishments.—Whoever commits sins against such laws must receive punishment without hindrance, especially for idolatry and conjuring,²³ for cruelty to parents²⁴ and terrible sins of the flesh,²⁵ which abuse the holiness of the natural bonds of affection. Holiness is further demanded in general directions, based upon God's presence as the Holy One.²⁶

The laws for the holiness of priests follow. In case of death,²⁷ which, as sin's wages, defiles, and in their natural family life,²⁸ they are to avoid contamination. Without blemish in body,²⁹ cleansed after uncleanness they are to bring holy and hallowed offerings.³⁰

Festivals.—Holy is the service and worship of Israel to be, in the great festivals, as in the weekly Sabbath.³¹ These festivals are the passover of deliverance;³² the festival of the harvest;³³ of pentecost, the offering of the first fruits;³⁴ the feast of trumpets, the beginning of the year;³⁵ the great day of atonement,³⁶ and the feast of tabernacles, commemorating Israel's wanderings.³⁷ Holiness is to be observed in daily worship. The holy lamp³⁸ and the shewbread³⁹ are to be kept properly. A daily holy worship demands holiness of life. Therefore, the blaspheming son of Shelomith⁴⁰ is stoned, and God's holiness is vindicated. His law is for the stranger also.⁴¹ As in the yearly, weekly, and daily worship, so God's holiness is to be taught in the Sabbatical year⁴² and the 50th year of jubilee⁴³ which effect the freedom of Israel. The holiness of worship must guarantee the right of all to home and freedom.⁴⁴ Social rights rest on religious sanctions.⁴⁵ Knowing this law, Israel is to choose between the blessing of keeping it⁴⁶ and the curse of transgression⁴⁷ Repentance will, however, save the transgressor.⁴⁸

In an appendix⁴⁹ the holiness of vows is emphasized which are made in redeeming the firstborn, in promised gifts, and in tithes.

Summary.—Thus in the great outlines as well as in the details of the laws of purity and holiness for priests and priestly people, God pictures the deep corruption of human nature, punishes transgression and demonstrates the need of expiation for sin. Ceremonial uncleanness enters into the minutest particulars of life and food. But for all uncleanness there is the sacrifice to be brought by the

²³ 20. 1 ff.
²⁴ 20. 9.
²⁵ 20. 10 ff.

²⁶ 20. 22 ff.

²⁷ 21. 1 ff.

²⁸ 21. 13 ff.

²⁹ 21. 17.

³⁰ 22.

³¹ 23. 1 ff.

³² 23. 5 ff.

³³ 23. 9.

³⁴ 23. 15 ff.

³⁵ 23. 23 ff.

³⁶ 23. 26.

³⁷ 23. 33 ff.

³⁸ 24. 1 ff.

³⁹ 24. 5 ff.

⁴⁰ 24. 10 ff.

⁴¹ 24. 13 ff.

⁴² 25. 1 ff.

⁴³ 25. 8 ff.

⁴⁴ 25. 14 ff.

⁴⁵ 26. 1, 2.

⁴⁶ 26. 3 ff.

⁴⁷ 26. 14 ff.

⁴⁸ 26. 40 ff.

⁴⁹ 27.

priest. This pictures the great Redeemer who is at once the true sacrifice for all sin and the final priest. When sin is removed the offerings of prayer and gratitude can be brought, and holiness will mark God's service and guarantee man's rights.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Sinfulness has corrupted the whole nature.
2. The sinful heart appears in the smallest things.
3. Sin is unholiness before God and uncleanness in man.
4. There must be sacrifice for sin.
5. The sacrifice must be offered by a mediator.
6. Christ is mediator and sacrifice.
7. The sanctified heart brings offerings of gratitude and peace.
8. Holiness is the true foundation of civil liberty.

L. O. C.

NUMBERS.

CHAPTER XXV.

Numbers continues the history of Israel's journey. It contains no complete record, but only gives incidents in an annalistic manner. With these it recounts the origin of certain laws. To show their rise facts before mentioned are again told. Numbers refers to an old book "The Wars of the Lord,"¹ and contains an ancient pastoral song of the well.²

Preparation for the March.—A census of men able to bear arms is first recorded.³ The various tribes are grouped about the sanctuary, and assigned their place for the march.⁴ But the non-combatants, the Levites, are also counted, and take the place of the firstborn, whose redemption is legalized.⁵ The law of service, the age and number of Levites are then given.⁶ As they are to be holy, so the whole camp is to be purified, that Israel's way may be clean before God. The unclean is removed; the law of restitution is unfolded, and the sacrifice to determine the justice of jealous suspicion is ordered.⁷ These enactments to keep or restore purity are followed by the law of the Nazarite,⁸ whose vows are special promises of separation from every defilement. Israel cleansed receives the constant form of divine benediction.⁹

The offerings of the princes at the final dedication of the tabernacle are recounted;¹⁰ the lighting of the golden candlesticks, as the sign of God's perpetual light over Israel, is ordered; the Levites are inducted into office and their time of service determined.¹¹ The law of the Passover is repeated, that an after-celebration may be provided for those excluded at the regular time by legal uncleanness.¹² God then gives the signal for departure from Sinai, and leads by the cloud of His presence.¹³

On the March.—Israel is now upon the march from Sinai to

the plains of Moab.¹⁴ On this journey Hobab, brother-in-law of Moses, is persuaded to cast in his lot with Israel.¹⁵ Israel soon sins anew. It unjustly complains against God and arouses His anger against itself; and it lusts for flesh and is weary of manna.¹⁶ In the burden which such sin and his work cast upon Moses,¹⁷ he asks God to relieve him of the whole load. Seventy elders are given Moses as spiritual helpers. Of these Eldad and Medad prophesy, foreshadowing the gift of the Spirit for all.¹⁸ But Israel is not yet guided by the Spirit. It murmurs in sin and receives its reward. For in the lustful eating of quails, which God sent, many die.¹⁹ Their graves testify of their sin.* A rebellious spirit against Moses seizes Miriam and Aaron, because Moses marries an Ethiopian woman. They speak against Moses' God-given place, and, therefore, God punishes Miriam with leprosy. But Moses in his great meekness prays for her recovery.²⁰ He is thus a true intercessor and foreshadows a greater Mediator. The wilderness of Paran is reached, and Kadesh, from whence twelve spies are sent out into Canaan.²¹ When they return, they give a glorious account of the land, but inspire a fear of its inhabitants. Israel taken with a panic will not advance, despite the assurances of Joshua and Caleb.²² As the people thus doubt God's power, He condemns them to forty year's wandering in the wilderness. But now in perverseness they will go northward. Vanquished by Amalekites and Canaanites they are thrown back to Hormah.²³

The Forty Years' Wandering Begins.—A few of its occurrences are preserved. In addition the law of sacrifices is further unfolded. Meat- and drink-offerings are to be the constant accompaniment of other sacrifices, to show the gladness of all gifts toward God.²⁴ Strangers are also to bring gifts.²⁵ A cake of dough is to be offered as a heave-offering of joy.²⁶ Sin offerings for trespasses of weakness are again ordered,²⁷ but presumptuous sins must be severely punished, as is exemplified in the case of the Sabbath breaker.²⁸ As a memorial of the covenant Israel is to put fringes on its garments;²⁹ for the covenant still remains with its laws despite Israel's sin.

The family of the Levite Korah joined by the Reubenites Dathan

* Kibroth-hattaavah—graves of lust.

³⁰ 16. 1 ff. and Abiram rebel against Moses and Aaron.³⁰ They resent Moses' and Aaron's authority and leadership. The rebel leaders are swallowed up by the earth; the multitude, which followed, is depopulated by a plague, which ceases upon Moses' prayer,³¹ after God's just wrath is satisfied. The right of Aaron to the special priesthood is confirmed by the budding rod;³² and the duties and income of the priests are carefully fixed.³³ As in the plague and during this whole time death becomes frequent, the law of purification by the ashes of the red heifer is promulgated.³⁴

Near Canaan.—The forty years have passed. Israel again gathers at Kadesh to proceed to Moab.³⁵ Miriam dies. Because of lack of water the people murmur.³⁶ Moses and Aaron wearied by the sin of the first generation, are overcome by this outbreak of the new generation, and act with angered, impatient disobedience.³⁷ Therefore they are not to enter the promised land. Israel advances; the Edomites block the way. Israel goes to Mount Hor, where Aaron dies.³⁸ By God's power Arad is conquered. Shortly Israel again murmurs. Fiery serpents are sent to punish. From them there is wonderful help by faith,³⁹ prefiguring the future salvation by the Messiah.⁴⁰ Passing around Edom Israel conquers Heshbon and Bashan,⁴¹ and arrives at the fields of Moab opposite Jericho.

Here Balaam, the prophet who loved the wages of unrighteousness, is sought by Balak of Moab and the Midianites to curse Israel.⁴² Despite God's hindrance Balaam would go; but he must bless thrice,⁴³ and sees the conquering star of Jacob,⁴⁴ a vision fully realized in Christ. But Israel thus blessed destroys itself by adultery with the Moabites and Midianites at the idolatrous festival of Baal-Peor. A mighty plague comes upon it, but the righteous zeal of Phinehas prepares rescue.⁴⁵

A new census is taken.⁴⁶ The daughters of Zelophedad are allowed to inherit.⁴⁷ Joshua is appointed leader.⁴⁸ The law of sacrifice for every day and the festivals is developed; vows of virginity are regulated.⁴⁹ War is declared on the Midianites, in which Balaam, who had incited them to lead Israel into adultery, perishes.⁵⁰ The law of division of booty is given. Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh

are allowed land on the east of Jordan.⁵¹ The list of places of en- ⁵¹ 32.
 campment kept by Moses is recorded.⁵² Laws are given for the ⁵² 33.
 possession of Canaan, and the boundaries provisionally assigned.⁵³ ⁵³ 34.
 The Levites receive forty-eight cities, six of which are to be cities of
 refuge.⁵⁴ The law of inheritance, suggested by the case of the ⁵⁴ 35.
 daughters of Zelophedad, is given, that women who inherit shall
 only marry men of their tribe, to keep the tribal possessions intact.⁵⁵ ⁵⁵ 36.

Summary.—God has numbered His people and keeps them. They murmur and rebel against Him and His prophets. Because of unbelief they cannot enter the promised land. By presumption they fall. Their sin taints even God's own leaders. But God accepts the mediator's prayer, pardons sins, and raises up a new generation and leader. For His covenant's sake grace doth abound.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God numbers and keeps His own.
2. Rebellious hearts wound God's love.
3. Unbelief loses God's promises.
4. The sin of presumption brings a great fall.
5. A sinful generation weakens even strong leaders.
6. God is true to His gracious covenant though generations pass and come.

DEUTERONOMY.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Its General Character.—As the people are gathered in the plain of Moab, east of the Jordan,¹ Moses begins a series of orations, which review the past with its experiences and lessons, and again inculcates the law. Occasionally the flow of an oration is interrupted by historical explanations.² Prefaces, titles, incidents also intervene. The style is full, rich, forceful and majestic.

The First Oration³ opens with recalling God's command to Israel to possess the land of promise. The main content is Moses' review of his work. First he calls to mind his experience, how after the giving of the law, he under Israel's burden and strife appointed elders.⁴ Then comes the great, critical time, when at Kadesh Israel would not advance, but forgot God's power in cowardly fear of the Anakim.⁵ God's wrath breaks forth; the people shall not pass over the Jordan. They are to wander. With plaintive sadness Moses tells how he, too, was involved in their sin. "The Lord was angry with me for your sakes" recurs as a refrain.⁶ The oration is full of passionate appeal, that the people may not forget God's will. When they forgot, they advanced presumptuously only to be defeated.⁷ But after long wandering,⁸ in which they are not to meddle with Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites,⁹ they conquer Og and Sihon. The period of possession of the land begins.¹⁰ But Moses, despite his prayer, is not to enter the promised land.¹¹ He is to see, not to have,¹² as he sadly recalls. His office is ended. These his words are not to be added to or taken from.¹³ As Israel remembers the majestic revelation of God when He gave the law, His choice of them before the nations, His guidance, His punishment of sin, they are to be true.¹⁴ If they forget, surely punishment will come. Yet if in their tribulations they seek God, they will find Him, for He is merciful. His

statutes are they to keep that it may be well with them.¹⁵ Then 15 4. 23 ff.
 Moses reiterates the need of cities of refuge.¹⁶ 16 4. 41 ff.

The Second Oration¹⁷ delivered in the valley over against 17 4. 44—26.
 Beth-Peor,¹⁸ begins with the giving of the covenant at Horeb.¹⁹ 18 4. 46.
19 5. 1 ff.
 Solemnly Moses recites the ten commandments,²⁰ earnestly reminds 20 5. 6 ff.
 Israel how they saw God's glory²¹ and yet lived, and then sums up 21 5. 23 ff.
 God's will, that they might fear Him,²² and keep the law of love to 22 5. 29.
 God and man.²³ Ever is Israel to recall and faithfully to teach this 23 6. 1 ff.
 law,²⁴ to remember God and His wonders and not tempt Him.²⁵ In 24 6. 7 ff.
25 6. 14 ff.
 its new land Israel is utterly to smite the nations, and not follow
 their idolatry;²⁶ but in holiness, keeping to the faithful God of the 26 7. 1 ff.
 covenant, be preserved from harm and led to victory.²⁷ Never 27 7. 6 ff.
 is the memory of God's dealings to be forgotten. He led and kept
 Israel in the wilderness.²⁸ When now they enter the promised land, 28 8. 1 ff.
 so rich and beautiful, and are satisfied, it is the Lord whom they
 should remember.²⁹ Passing over the Jordan, they are not to glory 29 8. 7 ff.
 as though by their righteousness they had come in.³⁰ For the 30 9. 1 ff.
 wickedness of the Canaanites the Lord doth drive them out. But
 Israel, ever stiff-necked, had provoked God's wrath in the desert,
 been saved by intercession,³¹ and a second time received the tables of 31 9. 7 ff.
 the law through God's mercy.³² Recalling this and all of God's 32 10. 1 ff.
 miracles and punishments, they are to enter with a circumcised
 heart, and fear, love and serve the Lord. Faithfulness in the cove-
 nant will give them whatever land their foot treadeth upon, and will
 bestow every blessing of nature. For disobedience the heavens will
 be closed. Between the blessing and the curse are they to choose.³³ 33 10. 11—12.

Then follow repetitions of laws, as duties of a holy people. One
 central place of worship³⁴ is there to be. Idolatry must be pun- 34 12.
 ished,³⁵ and heathenish customs of mourning and uncleanness must 35 13.
 be avoided.³⁶ Tithes are to be rendered;³⁷ release from debt be given 36 14. 1 ff.
37 14. 22 ff.
 to the poor and freedom to the slaves at the set time; and the first-
 lings of the cattle are to be sanctified.³⁸ The three great festivals 38 15.
 are to be kept.³⁹ The offices of the theocracy, their rights and 39 16. 1 ff.
 duties, are unfolded for judges,⁴⁰ kings of the future,⁴¹ priests and 40 16. 18—
17. 13.
 Levites.⁴² But the hope of the future is the great prophet like 41 17. 14 ff.
42 18.

⁴³ 18. 15. Moses, the Christ.⁴³ False prophets must be detected and re-
⁴⁴ 18. 20ff. jected.⁴⁴

Still other laws are recalled. They refer to cities of refuge,
⁴⁵ 19. changing boundaries, false witness,⁴⁵ service in war and siege of
⁴⁶ 20. cities,⁴⁶ murder, women taken in war, right of firstborn, stoning of a
⁴⁷ 21. stubborn son, burial of the hanged,⁴⁷ transgressions of the law of
⁴⁸ 22. purity,⁴⁸ membership in the congregation, purification of the camp,
⁴⁹ 23. fugitive servant, usury, vows,⁴⁹ divorce, oppression, leprosy,⁵⁰ pun-
⁵⁰ 24. ishment by scourging, right of animals, marriage of deceased
⁵¹ 25. brother's wife, unjust weights.⁵¹ A prayer for Pentecost follows, and
 a final admonition enforces obedience to the laws fragmentarily
⁵² 26. reviewed by the orator.⁵¹

⁵³ 27—28. 68. **The Third Oration**⁵³ is a mighty appeal of Moses to the
 people. Among elders, and with the priests and Levites, the bless-
 ings and curses, to be hereafter pronounced at Ebal and Gerizim, had
 been set forth by Moses. Then he unfolded the blessings which
 would follow obedience to God's law. Blessed was Israel to be in city
 and country, fruit of body, cattle and ground. The fulness of God's
⁵⁴ 28. 1 ff. good treasure would be theirs.⁵⁴ If the people will not hearken to the
 Lord, curses shall come. Disease, consumption, fever, mildew, the
 sword, enemies, madness and blindness of heart. There is the curse
 everywhere. Strangers shall have the land, but Israel shall serve
 its enemies and be led into a new captivity.

⁵⁵ 29, 30. **The Fourth Oration**,⁵⁵ of the covenant in Moab, points to
⁵⁶ 29. 10. personal responsibility.⁵⁶ The person, tribe, family that doeth wrong
 shall be cursed. The Lord will find the sin and judge it. The land
⁵⁷ 29. 20 ff. shall be like Sodom.⁵⁷ Secret searchings of sin are the Lord's, but
 the judgment shall be revealed. Mercy will God render, if Israel
⁵⁸ 30. 1 ff. remember God in her captivity.⁵⁸ Heaven and earth are witness that
⁵⁹ 30. 15 ff. life and death have been set before Israel.⁵⁹

⁶⁰ 31. **Moses' Farewell.**—In his farewell words,⁶⁰ Moses encourages
 the people. "Be strong and of good courage." "The Lord goeth
 before thee." As a human leader Joshua is appointed. The words of
⁶¹ 32. the covenant are written down. And then follows Moses' *song*.⁶¹ As
 rain shall his doctrine drop when he speaks of the Lord. God is the

Rock Who kept Israel among the nations as the apple of His eye. He gave them fatness, kine and wine. "But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked." Anger arises. Visions of trouble are seen. Arrows, hunger, heat, teeth of beasts, poison of serpents, and the sword shall come. Only short of destruction shall the judgment stop, that Israel's enemies may not glory against God. At last when Israel shall have thrown away its loathsome gods, the Lord will repent Him of His people, and again be their rock.

With a final benediction and stirring words of blessing to every tribe,⁶² Moses passes away. Some one else adds the account of his ⁶² 33. solitary way to Pisgah; his last gaze on the land of promise; his lonely, unknown grave. Great is the weeping, and like Moses arose not another prophet.⁶³ Thus ends this book of magnificent eloquence ⁶³ 34. with its refrain: "Lest ye forget."

Summary.—Obedience to God's law brings blessing. Sin, which breaks the covenant, causes every sort of curse. But over all is mercy, which chose Israel and which will save the repentant to the uttermost.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God's good dealings are not to be forgotten.
2. God shows mercy to thousands who keep His commandments, and blesses them body and soul.
3. Sin brings every curse and evil of life.
4. The repentant sinner shall live.

JOSHUA.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Prophetic-Historical Books.—With the book of Joshua there begins the series of prophetic-historical books, which the Jews call the “first prophets.” This series extends through II Kings, but Ruth does not belong to it. A connected thread of history is carried on from the conquest of Palestine to the exile in Babylon. Historical facts are not told to portray Israel’s outward development, but to show God’s gracious dealing with His people. Facts are selected and arranged to teach the history of salvation, as it was prepared despite Israel’s sin. Therefore, it is the history of prophets, who unfold God’s action in accord with His covenant, and Israel’s disobedience toward this covenant.

Joshua is rightly classed with these books. It might appear to be a part of the Law, and is by some put with it for similarity of language, style and structure, and because it carries forward the story of the latter part of Numbers. The first six books of the Bible are then called *Hexateuch* (the six-fold book). But there are in Joshua new words, and a partly different linguistic coloring from that found in the Pentateuch. The style is in part living, vivid, but very largely stereotype, formal, owing particularly to the catalogues of conquests, and the detailed account of boundaries. The entering of the promised land marks a new, distinct period in Israel’s history, different from the formative beginning of the law. Joshua is Moses’ successor, yet he does not simply complete his work, but inaugurates a new time. As the record of his time and labors, this book bears his name, though written somewhat after his life.

¹ Chap 1-12. **The Conquest of Palestine** is first told.¹ After Moses’ death Joshua receives anew the promise of Canaan, and encouraged by God’s presence, is reminded of the law.² Thereupon he com-

mands Israel to prepare to advance, and bids Reuben, Gad, and half-Manasseh remember their promise to assist their brethren in gaining the land west of the Jordan.³ Spies are now sent forth to view the land, especially strong-walled Jericho. They are received and concealed by Rahab, to whom they promise protection, for she believes in Israel's God,⁴ His power and promise.⁵ To the Jordan Joshua advances, and the people are ordered to follow with the ark of God. While the ark rests in the Jordan, the water is miraculously kept back, and Israel passes over.⁶ To commemorate this divine help twelve stones are taken from the Jordan and erected, while in the river there is a like monument.⁷

At Gilgal the first night's encampment is made.⁸ Fear begins to fall on the Canaanites.⁹ The covenant with God is re-established by a solemn Passover and by circumcision to mark Israel as God's holy people and to roll away the shame of Egypt.¹⁰ Manna falls for the last time.

First Cities Taken.—Joshua is encouraged by the appearance of an angel, as the captain of the hosts of the Lord.¹¹ The actual conquest begins. Jericho is taken and destroyed according to God's instruction and by His presence, and a curse is pronounced on any one who would seek to rebuild it.¹² The second attack is on Ai, which opens the way to the interior, but Israel is repulsed because of the sin of Achan, who took what God had accursed at Jericho. After Achan is stoned, God's anger is turned away,¹³ and now Ai is overcome by an ambush.¹⁴ Joshua builds an altar of praise,¹⁵ and then from Ebal and Gerizim the blessings and curses are pronounced.¹⁶

Wars with Canaanites.—The northern Canaanite kings combine against Israel, but the Gibeonites by fraud obtain peace from Israel, which admits them to an unlawful covenant because God was not consulted.¹⁷ Yet the deception of the Gibeonites when discovered leads to their continual servitude.¹⁸ The southern Canaanites, alarmed at the defection of Gibeon, seek to punish it, but Joshua meets and crushes their five kings, by falling on them suddenly at Beth-horon. God assists with a hailstorm. At early

³ 1. 10-18.

⁴ Heb. 11. 31.
⁵ 2.

⁶ 3.

⁷ 4. 1 ff.

⁸ 4. 19 ff.

⁹ 5. 1.

¹⁰ 5. 2 ff.

¹¹ 5. 10 ff.

¹² 6.

¹³ 7.

¹⁴ 8. 1-29.

¹⁵ 8. 30, 31.

¹⁶ 8. 32-37;
cp. Deut. 27

¹⁷ 9. 1 ff.

¹⁸ 9. 16 ff.

dawn the moon sets not, nor does the sun rise, till all the enemies are routed, for in the words of the ancient book of Jasher (a book of hero-deeds of the righteous) Joshua had called on God.¹⁹ Subsequently the northern Canaanites, though separated from their southern kinsmen by Joshua's victories, gather with strong force, under Jabin, king of Hazor, but are surprised and completely vanquished by Joshua at the waters of Merom.²⁰ Others are defeated and a list of the conquered is given.²¹ The conquests were only partial, but they furnished Israel with the foundation for complete possession of the land, had it only faithfully followed up the early victories.

The Division of the Land among the tribes of Israel is begun at Gilgal. After the tribes east of the Jordan have their land reaffirmed, and Levi, detailed for God's special service, is excepted,²² allotment begins. Caleb, for his fidelity, receives Hebron and its surroundings.²³ Judah is assigned its territory, but Othniel conquers Debir, and Jebus is still unconquered.²⁴ The boundaries of the sons of Joseph are fixed, yet they permit the Canaanites to remain among them and are dissatisfied with their portion.²⁵ At Shiloh the distribution continues. After the erection of the tabernacle, and taking the record of the undivided land, Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and Dan receive their share.²⁶ Joshua is given Timnath-Serah as a special reward.²⁷ Six cities of refuge are fixed, and forty-eight cities are assigned to priests and Levites.²⁸ The eastern tribes return home, and build an altar to remind them of their unity with their brethren. Misunderstood in this, the rest of Israel prepares to attack them, until it is shown that what was considered a defection was an act of union.²⁹

Joshua's Farewell.—Joshua now delivers his farewell addresses. The *first* to the elders is a mighty exhortation to remember God and His law, Who gave them their land. Communion with the Canaanites and their idolatry would bring curse. Obedience would secure blessing.³⁰ The *second* address, to the people at Shechem, reminds them of what God had done for them, and exhorts them to serve the holy, jealous God. This they promise, and Joshua

affirms the covenant.³¹ In the book of the law this covenant is written. Joshua dies. Israel now buries the bones of Joseph, which were brought from Egypt. Eleazar, the son of Aaron, also dies.³² 31 24. 1-24.
32 24. 26 ff.

Summary.—This book shows how the promise given to Abraham, that his seed shall possess the land, is being fulfilled. With this fulfillment the blessing through Abraham's seed is finally bound up. But the conquest of Israel raises the moral problem of the war against the Canaanites. They had forfeited their land by their great sin, and Israel, in following out God's command, saw in it a holy judgment against corruption and a warning against idolatry. In establishing a purer life it served humanity.

The book of Joshua moves about the three thoughts of God's righteousness, holiness and grace. The righteousness of God measures out punishment to the Canaanites. His grace is poured out upon the Israelites according to His promise. Upon both His holiness is revealed; upon the Canaanites by the destruction that waits on sinfulness; upon the Israelites by their being chosen to communion with God, that they might live holily. God's righteousness, grace and holiness redound to His glory.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God's righteousness appears as truthfulness in His relations toward men.
2. To the unholy, righteousness must bring punishment.
3. Where there is the covenant of mercy, God shows grace.
4. The punishment of the sinner and the forgiveness of the believer exalt God's holiness.
5. Every attribute of God redounds to His glory.

JUDGES—RUTH.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

JUDGES.

The Times of the Judges.—The book of Judges contains the history of Israel from the death of Joshua to the time of Samuel, a period of about 350 years. With certain standing formulas, which indicate the social and religious conditions, it combines very fresh and powerful description told in a realistic style. Israel is shown in a period of depression. The Canaanites are not overcome, but reassert their power. National unity is not yet attained. The high demands of the law are not kept, but idolatry, wickedness, disorder, selfishness reign. In this time of religious and social anarchy God raises up *judges*. Their work is not simply to uphold divine righteousness by decisions, but by action. They are executive as well as judicial officers, deliverers as much as judges. Their power is generally restricted to a few tribes.

Canaanites Not All Driven Out.—The introduction of the book of Judges connects with Joshua. It tells of the struggle of Judah for its possessions, its victory over the cruel king Adoni-Bezek,¹ the gaining of Jerusalem and Hebron, and the taking of Debir by Othniel, who receives as additional reward Achsah, Caleb's daughter, to be his wife.² The Kenites come to dwell among Judah.³ *The other tribes do not drive out the Canaanites,*⁴ but mingle with them. Therefore they receive the reproach of God's angel for their disobedience, and they weep, but they do not really do better.⁵

The Changeableness of Israel.—The main part of the book shows the changeableness of Israel. Ever and again it sinned through union with the Canaanites, and was punished. Punishment brought repentance, upon which God raised up judges to work deliverance from the nations that were left to test Israel's obedience.⁶

This inward reason for the character of Israel's history in the time of the judges is illustrated in six general pictures.

Oppression and Deliverance.—The first picture gives in mere outline the oppression by Cushan-Rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, from whom *Othniel*, Caleb's younger brother, delivers the land. ⁷ 7 3. 8-11. The second picture has more color and detail. It shows Eglon of Moab, who, assisted by Ammon and Amalek, oppresses Israel. The deliverer is *Ehud* of Benjamin, the left-handed, who with his long dagger treacherously slays Eglon.⁸ A note is added about *Shamgar*, who ⁸ 3. 12-30. slew the Philistines with an oxgoad.⁹ ⁹ 3. 31.

Deborah and Barak.—The third picture is one of great power. Jabin, king of Hazor, and Sisera, his general, are warred against by Barak, who is moved thereto by Deborah. This judge and prophetess gives a mighty impulse to Israel's unity, and causes many of the northern tribes to join. But victory is gotten because Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite, in her tent slew Sisera, who trusted in her hospitality.¹⁰ In a poem of strength and fine description Deborah with ¹⁰ 4. Barak celebrates the victory.¹¹ ¹¹ 5.

Gideon.—The fourth picture has as its theme the long oppression by Midian, and as its hero Gideon.¹² Gideon begins by destroy- ¹² 6. 10-15. ing the images of Baal, after an angel has instructed him and given proof of his heavenly mission. But a further, twofold sign is needed before God prevails and wavering Gideon proceeds to an attack.¹³ ¹³ 6. When then at the well of Harod 30,000 gather, only 300 are finally selected, by a shrewd practical test, as the courageous ones, for by the few is God's work to be done. The dream of a Midianite, overheard by Gideon, is a further sign of encouragement. Through a strategem, confusion and a great rout are inflicted on the Midianites, and two of their princes, Oreb and Zeb, are taken and slain.¹⁴ ¹⁴ 7. Gideon pursues, not hindered by Ephraim's jealousy, because it has no leading part. Two more kings, Zebah and Zalmunna, are taken, and two cities, Penuel and Succoth, which refused to aid Gideon, are razed. After this great victory, Gideon, from the many goods captured, makes an ephod, which he puts in Ophrah, and leads Israel into idolatry, out of the punishment of which he had been called to deliver it.¹⁵ As ¹⁵ 8. 2n

addition to this picture we are shown *Abimelech*, son of Gideon, who would make himself king, described by Jotham to be the thorn-bush among trees, and finally killed by a millstone, thrown by a woman from the wall of Thebez.¹⁶ *Tola* of Issachar, and *Jair* of Gilead, are simply enumerated as judges.¹⁷ Israel sins and is oppressed.¹⁸

Jephthah.—The fifth picture brings before us Jephthah as he conquers the Ammonites, after a vow to sacrifice what first met him on his return. To this vow his own daughter falls prey.¹⁹ The Ephraimites in wounded pride and jealousy begin war against Jephthah, but detected by their "Sibboleth," are badly defeated.²⁰ As further judges, *Ibzan*, *Elon*, *Abdon* are simply enumerated.²¹

Samson.—The last picture of the oppression by the Philistines introduces us to the physically powerful but morally weak Samson.²² His birth is announced to Manoah and his wife by an angel, who confirms his message by signs, and orders that Samson be a Nazarite.²³ His life is marked by marvellous deeds and strange alliances with Philistine wives. On the way to Timnath he rends a lion, and when there weds a woman, and gives a riddle at the wedding for a prize. Its solution is cajoled out of him by his wife and told the Philistines. To pay the prize Samson slays thirty men of Ashkelon and takes their garments.²⁴ Thereupon his wife is denied him, and he avenges himself by sending 300 foxes among the crops to burn them. His wife is then burnt by the Philistines. The men of Judah fearing the Philistines, deliver Samson bound, but he tears the ropes and kills 1000 Philistines with the jawbone of an ass.²⁵ When apparently caught at Gaza, he escapes by carrying away the city gates. He is enamored of Delilah, and she tries to secure the secret of his strength. Twice is she deceived, but at last succeeds. Samson is taken in his sleep, brought to Gaza and imprisoned; but when exhibited at a festival in Dagon's temple, he pulls down the building, and dying kills many Philistines.²⁶ Two additional pictures are given of the time of the Judges. The first is that of Micah, who erects a private sanctuary, and the Danites as they conquer Laish;²⁷ and the other is the terrible sin of Benjamin, and the plan devised to keep alive the tribe almost destroyed for its wrong.²⁸ Both incidents belong to the early period of the judges.

16 9.

17 10. 1-5.

18 10. 6 ff.

19 11.

20 12. 1-7.

21 12. 8 ff.

22 13-16.

23 13.

24 14.

25 15.

26 16.

27 17, 18.

28 19-21.

Summary.—The help rendered by the judges is to impress Israel with the truth of divine deliverance; but the hope of the one great deliverer, to whom they point, slumbers at this time.

The lessons of these wild and troublous days are: Departure from Jehovah causes every ill; repentance and turning to God bring deliverance.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Forgetfulness of God's love brings anarchy.
 2. Worldly friendship is enmity toward God.
 3. Repentance brings help.
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RUTH.

Its Character.—The book of Ruth is placed after Judges, because it belongs to this time. The Hebrews class it with the third great division of their Bible, "the writings." It is a charming little book, bright and sparkling in style, true to the customs of its day, filled with local color, and pervaded with fine feeling, showing the moral delicacy and religious fidelity of some families in times of public degradation.

Its Contents.—A man of Bethlehem during a famine goes with his wife and three sons to Moab. There all die but the mother, Naomi. She then longs to return to Bethlehem. Her Moabite daughters-in-law would go with her. One is dissuaded by her, but the other, Ruth, in filial piety and in strong adherence to true religion, accompanies her in her poverty.²⁹ At Bethlehem, Ruth, the ²⁹ 1. poor widow, is permitted to glean in the fields of Boaz, the rich farmer, who is very merciful.³⁰ She appeals to him, by advice of ³⁰ 2. Naomi, in the custom of the day, to wed her.³¹ And when the ³¹ 3. next of kin refuses this his duty, according to law, Boaz takes her. ³² ³² 4. He becomes through Obed, the father of Jesse, and therefore Ruth is the great-grand-mother of king David.

Summary.—With the lesson of filial love and its reward is combined the thought that the heathen have a right to the covenant of God. God makes the despised honorable. From this poor Moabite widow, there descended the great Saviour of mankind.³³

³³ Matt. 1. 5.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Honoring parents brings temporal blessings (4th Com.).
2. A religious life is a great power to convert others.
3. Affection is purest where it rests on faith.
4. God chooses the humble to confound the mighty.
5. Christ, though son of David in the flesh, comes of humble ancestry.

I SAMUEL.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Character of I and II Samuel.—Two books bear the name of Samuel, because he stands forth as the great prophet who forms the transition from the judges to the kings.

In the Greek and Latin translations these books are called I and II Kings, as they tell of the rise of the kingdom even in Samuel's work, and really form one history with our books of the Kings. Their style is pure, clear, simple and forcible. The contents, selected from fuller sources, are often marked by short descriptions of very important deeds, and again by detailed biographical notices of minor events in the lives of Saul and David. This is characteristic, for the spiritual import and not the natural value of Israel's history is to be given.

The Birth of Samuel.—A family episode of the house of Elkanah in Ramah opens the first book of Samuel. Hannah, Elkanah's wife, reproached by Penninah, her rival, through prayer and upon promise of Eli, the high-priest, obtains a son. Him she names Samuel (asked of God), and dedicates him to God's service.¹ This dedication is accompanied by a prayer. In it she praises divine mercy, which humbles the arrogant, proud and high, and exalts the poor, humble and lowly. The prayer ends with the joyous hope of God's king, His anointed, a prophecy of the near future, which was to be fully and finally realized, however, only in Christ.²

¹ 1.

² 2. 1-10.

Samuel and Eli.—The child Samuel, though in the temple, is in wicked surroundings. Eli's sons are corrupt and sensual. Their indulgent father does not punish them, even though warned by a prophet that his house shall be cut off.³ A second warning comes to Eli in the first revelation given to Samuel in a dream.⁴ The willing obedience of Samuel fits him for his prophetic work, which extended from Dan to Beersheba with Shiloh as the centre of revelation.⁵ Pun-

³ 2. 11-36.

⁴ 3. 1-18.

⁵ 3. 19 ff.

ishment now comes to Eli. At the battle of Ebenezer his sons fall, Israel is defeated, and the ark of God, that had been sent for, is taken by the Philistines. The report of this causes Eli's death, and glory seems to have departed from Israel in the loss of the ark and the death of the priests.⁶ But God defends His glory. The captured ark brings destruction to the image of the Philistine god, Dagon, and severe ailment to the people at Ashkelon, and later to those of Gath and Ekron, when the ark is taken there.⁷ Therefore, the Philistines return the ark to Bethshemesh, whose unholy, inquisitive people suffer, and send the ark to Kirjath-jearim.⁸ The people of this city keep it in sanctity. Israel now repents at Mizpeh, and conquers the Philistines. Samuel, who has inspired them to this, travels about the country to judge.⁹

Saul Made King.—As Samuel grows old his sons gain power. They become corrupt and the people *demand a king*. Though it was in the plan of God that Israel should have a king; yet that Israel demands a king without reliance upon God, in cowardly fear of the enemies,¹⁰ and in imitation of the heathen, was a rejection of God's rule. This Samuel impresses upon Israel, and foretells what power the king will exert over them.¹¹ The first king is found, when Saul of Benjamin inquires of Samuel about the lost asses of his father. Privately Saul is annointed and soon receives the spirit of God.¹² Subsequently a national assembly in Mizpeh selects Saul, who shrank from the great responsibility.¹³ But he proves his title by a great victory over Nahash, king of the Ammonites, forgives his opponents, and is confirmed as king in Gilgal.¹⁴ Samuel, by a strong appeal, stands justified before Israel, leads them to repentance by a mighty sign against their sinful demand of a king, counsels them to fear God, and obey His voice, and warns them against wickedness. Then he lays down his office.¹⁵

Saul's Disobedience and Rejection.—Saul now reigns.¹⁶ Yet he scarcely begins to rule, when after the valor of his son Jonathan at Geba, he disobeys at Gilgal by not awaiting Samuel, but impatiently offers sacrifices without the prophet.¹⁷ At Michmash Jonathan, almost alone, overcomes the Philistines, but is brought near death by Saul's

hasty oath. Other wars of Saul are mentioned and his family relations given.¹⁸ By divine command Saul is to destroy Amalek. But ¹⁸ 14. he spares their king Agag, and much spoil. For this deceptive disobedience God rejects him.¹⁹ ¹⁹ 15.

The Rise of David in Saul's reign is now made sure, as had been Saul's selection in Samuel's time. Samuel, by God's order, secretly anoints David, who is soon sent for to quiet Saul's evil spirit, by playing on the harp.²⁰ In a battle of the Philistines against Israel at ²⁰ 16. Shochoh, David kills the giant Goliath, gains the friendship of Jonathan, and the good will of the people.²¹ Saul becomes jealous ²¹ 17-18. 9. and angry. But he gives Michal to David as wife, as was promised the victor of Goliath, though David had first to prove his prowess by another deed.²² ²² 18. 10 ff.

David a Fugitive from Saul.—Saul plots against David's life, but Jonathan temporarily averts this hatred of his father. A new victory of David causes new rage in Saul, who almost slays David. Now David escapes to Samuel and cannot be taken.²³ Jonathan, with personal ²³ 19. risk, cements his friendship with David, and after an attempt to reconcile Saul, warns David to flee from the king's wrath.²⁴ David ²⁴ 20. goes to Nob, takes Goliath's sword from the tabernacle, and then flees to Gath, where he feigns madness to escape harm from the Philistines.²⁵ An outlaw, David now goes to the cave of Adullam, where ²⁵ 21. men gather about him. For safety he brings his parents to Moab. Meanwhile Saul has killed the priests at Nob, whence David took Goliath's sword.²⁶ Of the Philistines David receives kindness, but the ²⁶ 22. Ziphites betray him to Saul, and he flees to the wilderness of Maon.²⁷ ²⁷ 23. Saul follows. David has an opportunity to kill him in a cave at Engedi, but spares the Lord's anointed king. Saul moved by this act returns home.²⁸ At this time Samuel dies. David seeks support from ²⁸ 24. miserly Nabal. Refused, he would have slain him had not Abigail, Nabal's wife, interfered. After Nabal's death David takes this wise woman as a wife.²⁹ Saul seeks David again; the Ziphites again ²⁹ 25. betray him. Saul's life is once more in David's power, but David once more spares him,³⁰ and then goes for safety to Ziklag,³¹ which he had ³⁰ 26. ³¹ 27. received of the Philistine king of Gath. The Philistines go up against

- ³² 28. Saul, who in his dread seeks a witch to call Samuel from the dead.³²
 David is not permitted by the Philistines to go with them into this
³³ 29. war.³³ Yet while he went with them a short way, the Amalekites
³⁴ 30. despoiled Ziklag. David pursues, overcomes, and conquers them.³⁴
 Meantime the battle against Saul rages at Gilboa. Israel is defeated,
³⁵ 31. Saul and his sons fall.³⁵

Summary.—The value of I Samuel is to show the support which prophecy is to give the kingdom when right, and its opposition when the kingdom departs from God. The kingdom has an outlook toward the future reign of the Messiah.

We see how weak indulgence and wickedness destroy priests; corruption the noblest prophet's sons; self-will and disobedience a most valorous king; and how cowardly unbelief and worldliness lead astray a nation. God, despite the sins of priests, protects His holiness and raises up a new power in His prophets. When prophecy seems to fail, God succeeds in His purposes, despite Israel's sinful demand by granting a king. When one king fails, a shepherd lad is raised up and made strong. God ever prevails and carries out His purpose of salvation.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Weak indulgence of sin brings destruction.
2. Self-will leads to God's rejection.
3. Worldliness corrupts God's people.
4. God sometimes grants selfish desires as a chastisement.
5. No sin can thwart God's purpose.

II SAMUEL.

CHAPTER XXX.

David Reigns Over Judah.—The second book of Samuel contains the history of David's rule. It opens by describing his just severity against the boastful messenger of Saul's death ; and with a dirge full of sadness for Israel's discomfiture, of high appreciation of Saul's valor and of mourning affection for Jonathan.¹ David goes to Hebron and becomes king over Judah. In Hebron he rules for seven and a half years. Ishbosheth, Saul's son, is upheld by the mighty general Abner, and rules in the north. A battle ensues in which Abner is worsted, though young, eager Asahel, Joab's brother, is slain by Abner.² David and his house grow stronger, and soon Abner, reproved for his boldness, breaks with Ishbosheth and comes to David. Joab then treacherously murders Abner, avenging Asahel. For this, David curses Joab and deeply mourns Abner's death.³ Ishbosheth is slain, and his murderers are punished by David.⁴

David Reigns Over All Israel.—David is now annointed king of all Israel. Jerusalem and Mount Zion are taken, and two victories against the Philistines in Baal-perazim and Rephaim are gained. David increases in greatness and power, his house flourishes, his palace is built, Hiram of Tyre sending material and workmen.⁵ The ark is brought from Kirjath-jearim to Mount Zion. In its joyous coming David leads in a religious dance, but is despised for so doing by Michal.⁶ For the ark David contemplates building a temple. Nathan, the prophet, first approves, but afterward, upon God's direct word, disallows. Yet God promises an eternal throne to the house of David, a promise fulfilled in Christ. With deep gratitude and high praise David accepts God's merciful promise given to his house.⁷ After a mention of some of David's battles against the Philistines, Moabites and Syrians, a list of David's royal officers is given,⁸ and his

9 9. kind care of Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, recounted.⁹ David's kingdom is now at its height.

David's Sin.—The period of humiliation sets in. The Ammonitic-Syrian war begins. Hanun, the Ammonite king, outrages David's messengers of condolence. The Syrians join in league with Ammon. They are conquered by Joab at Medeba and by David at Helam.¹⁰ On his victorious return to Jerusalem, David in his idle glory is enamored of Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, a faithful and devoted soldier. Failing to cover up his transgression by recalling Uriah from the war, David afterwards has Uriah put into a dangerous place at the siege of Rabbah. Uriah falls on the field of battle, and then David openly takes Bathsheba to wife.¹¹ But now Nathan, the prophet, causes David to condemn himself, by the skillful telling of a parable. With direct words he then accuses David, who confesses his great guilt and truly repents. Bathsheba's first son dies. Her second son, Solomon, is born, and now Rabbah, the rock city, is taken.¹² Though David repented, his sin bore fruit among his children. Ammon abuses Tamar, his half-sister, and is killed by Absalom, who then flees.¹³ A wise woman of Tekoah, engaged by Joab, brings about the assuagement of David's wrath against Absalom and his return is granted.¹⁴

Absalom's Rebellion.—Absalom secretly wins the heart of the people by his flattery. And slowly he plans until finally a rebellion is raised, in which Ahitophel, one of David's counsellors, joins. Upon learning of the approaching rebels David, weeping, flees from Jerusalem over Mount Olivet. The priests, Zadok and Abiathar who accompanied him with the ark, are sent back. Hushai, another great counsellor, also returns that he may hinder and defeat Ahitophel's plans.¹⁵ Traitors arise, among them Ziba, servant of Mephibosheth, who, by false representation, gains Mephibosheth's home. Shimei, of the house of Saul, curses and throws stones at David as he flees at Bahurim. Meantime Absalom has entered Jerusalem and on advice of Ahitophel commits a most shameful outrage.¹⁶ Ahitophel then counsels immediate pursuit of David, but Hushai advises delay. God confuses Absalom and the latter accepts

Hushai's advice. David, secretly advised, has time to prepare,¹⁷ so that ¹⁷ 17. when Amasa leads on the host of Absalom he is defeated. Absalom as he flees is caught in a tree by his long, effeminate locks. When he is found thus, Joab ruthlessly kills him.¹⁸ Thereupon David mourns, ¹⁸ 18. but on Joab's advice restrains his mourning, returns, and pardons his enemies. The tribe of Judah is dissatisfied, because it has not been especially called to escort David back to Jerusalem.¹⁹ Sheba then ¹⁹ 19. raises a force among Judah against David. Of this Amasa is captain. Him Joab succeeds in killing by treachery. Sheba is pursued to Abel, where, to save the city, a woman has Sheba's head cut off and cast over the city wall. A short list of David's officers follows.²⁰ ²⁰ 20.

A series of additions includes the story of a three years' famine caused by Saul's slaying of the Gibeonites. The famine is appeased by the hanging of seven sons of Saul in Gibeah. Some of these are children of Rizpah, and she watched and protected the dead bodies. Moved by this David had them buried together with the bones of Saul and Jonathan, which till then were unburied.²¹ Some of David's ²¹ 21. 1-14. deeds against the Philistines are told, in which by his valor he almost lost his life.²² A mighty psalm of praise by David is also added, in ²² 21. 15 ff. which the Lord is praised as the Rock, the deliverer from all enemies, the tower of salvation, Who showeth mercy to His king.²³ David ²³ 22. gives final directions what is to be the policy after his death.²⁴ The ²⁴ 23. 1-7. great heroes of David's time are mentioned with their valorous deeds, but Joab for his cruel treachery is omitted.²⁵ Finally there is not ²⁵ 23. 8 ff. overlooked another sin of David, his numbering of Israel by Satan's temptation. For this there comes a great pestilence.²⁶ ²⁶ 24.

Summary.—The second book of Samuel returns to the beginning of both books. What is incomplete and promised is being carried out. The priesthood going under in Eli's house, arises in new, vigorous lines, and a temple is planned. The prophets, whose schools Samuel founds, apparently crowded back by the kingdom, prove necessary to warn and direct kings, that their sin may not destroy Israel. The kingdom, foreseen by Hannah, arises. Jehovah in these books is therefore first called the Lord of Hosts, for He fights for His kingdom and is still King. The human kings fail. The best

representative, David, falls into grievous sin. Hence the fulfillment of the kingdom, the eternal throne of David, can only come in David's greatest son, the Lord of Lords.

The life of David unfolds the mighty power and unswerving grace of God bestowed upon the king of strong faith and of gentle, forgiving love. A child of his age in cruelty of war, in sensual indulgence, he rises by sincere repentance to a better life, and cherishes the high hope of the future King of Righteousness.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God's grace makes strong the weak.
2. The child of God has reverence for God's anointed servant.
3. Forgiveness marks a true believer.
4. God's own ought not be slaves of their age.
5. Sincere contrition humbles itself to attain forgiveness.
6. The only Ever-Righteous Man is Christ, the King of Righteousness.

I KINGS.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Books of Kings continue the story of the books of Samuel. Their main content is the history of the Kings of Israel. At times larger space is given to the kings of the ten tribes, because more occurred there than in Judah. But the story always passes from the northern tribes, as the more remote, to Judah as the kingdom nearer the divine plan. The prophets figure largely, because they form the spiritual support of the kingdoms. The style and language is the same throughout both books. That their separation is not real, is shown by their own plan. The chronology is carefully marked. The conduct of the kings is judged by the standard of the Mosaic law in a stereotyped expression. Set formulas are also used to describe the beginning of each reign, the manner in which it was conducted, the character of each king, the close of the rule and the death of the king. Despite these formal elements there is a charming simplicity of description. Many sources have been drawn on, *e.g.*, annals of the deeds of Solomon,¹ annals of the daily deeds of the kings of Judah,² and a similar book for Israel.³ All these annals seem to have been compiled from the official chronicles.

Solomon's Reign opens this period.⁴ The kingdom is established in David's old age, in which Abishag is his attendant. Adonijah's attempt to gain the throne is thwarted, and Solomon is anointed king through Nathan's planning. Adonijah is forgiven.⁵ David gives his last directions and dies. For misdeeds Abiathar is banished; and Adonijah, Joab and Shimei are put to death.⁶ Solomon is now at his height. Married to Pharaoh's daughter, he obtains by his choice, as a divine gift, true wisdom, which soon exhibits itself in his judgments.⁷ Mighty princes gather about him, and peace prevails in the kingdom. Large, splendid, and luxurious

¹ 1 Kings 11. 41.
² 1 Kings 14. 29; 15. 7;
2 Kings 8. 23.
³ 1 Kings 14. 19; 15. 31;
16. 5;
2 Kings 1. 18.
etc.
⁴ 1-11.

⁵ 1.

⁶ 2.

⁷ 3.

- ⁸ 4. is Solomon's establishment.⁸ Upon the congratulations of Hiram, King of Tyre, Solomon unfolds his plan to build a temple and asks for timber from Hiram. Many workmen are also employed by
- ⁹ 5. Solomon.⁹ The great temple with all its appointments is built in
- ¹⁰ 6. eleven years.¹⁰ Solomon also erects palaces for himself and the queen, a porch of pillars, and a hall of judgment. A great workman, named
- ¹¹ 7. like the Syrian king, is the chief director.¹¹ The temple is dedicated by Solomon with numerous sacrifices. He prays for God's presence in the temple, as a place of prayer, strength, comfort and help to
- ¹² 8. Israel, and concludes with a benediction upon all Israel.¹² God then renews His promise of mercy to David's house, if Solomon will obey and keep God's ways.¹³ Solomon's wealth is told of; the cities he
- ¹³ 9, 1-9. erected, the slaves he possessed, the trade he carried on.¹⁴ Attracted by his glory the queen of Sheba comes. Then are described all the
- ¹⁴ 9, 10 ff. golden vessels, the ivory throne, the chariots of Solomon.¹⁵ But now the decay begins, for Solomon takes many heathen wives and is led into idolatry. Enemies arise: Hadad who goes to Egypt; Rezon in Syria; in Israel Jeroboam, to whom the prophet Ahijah promises a
- ¹⁵ 10. part of the kingdom.¹⁶
- ¹⁶ 11.

- The Divided Kingdoms.**—Now approaches the division of the kingdom and the period of enmity between the kings of Judah and Israel.¹⁷ Rehoboam, Solomon's son, rejecting the advice of the old counsellors, listens to the young men, and refuses to lighten the burden of the people. The tribes then separate at Schechem. Rehoboam must flee. Jeroboam becomes king of the ten northern tribes. He fortifies Schechem, introduces calf-worship in Dan and Bethel, and changes the feasts of tabernacles to the 15th day of the 8th month to prevent Israel from going to Jerusalem.¹⁸ Jeroboam leads his new cult, but its destruction is announced by a man of God who dies for his disobedience.¹⁹ Jeroboam's son, Abijah, is taken sick and dies, as Ahijah, the prophet had announced to Jeroboam's wife, whom, though disguised, he recognized. To her the prophet also tells the judgment upon Jeroboam's house. Nadab succeeds Jeroboam.²⁰
- ¹⁷ 12-16, 23.
- ¹⁸ 12.
- ¹⁹ 13.
- ²⁰ 14, 1-20.

In Judah Rehoboam is also idolatrous, and Shishak of Egypt despoils Jerusalem. Abijam, Rehoboam's son, surpasses his father in

idolatry.²¹ Asa, the next king, returns to the truth, but later makes a covenant with Ben-Hadad of Syria against Baasha of Israel, who was fortifying Rama.²² In Israel five kings quickly succeeded each other, beginning with Nadab. Baasha, whose house is threatened with a shameful end by the prophet Jehu; Elah, the son, upon whom the prophecy is executed by Zimri, captain of the chariots; Omri, captain of the host, who displaces Zimri after seven days. Tibni opposes Omri, but Omri prevails, and makes Samaria his capital. He becomes a mighty king.²³

²¹ 14. 21—
15. 8.
²² 15. 9-24.
²³ 15. 25—
16. 28.

A Dangerous Friendship arises between the two kingdoms. It is dangerous to Judah because Ahab reigns in the northern kingdom, who through the influence of Jezebel, his wife, introduces Baal-worship.²⁴ To combat Baalism, Elijah, the prophet, is raised up. Suddenly he appears and announces to Ahab a three years' famine. During this famine Elijah is kept at the brook Cherith and fed by the widow at Zarephath.²⁵ Then as the three years end, there comes the mighty conflict on Mt. Carmel, where Elijah receives God's approval by fire. God is confessed, the Baal-priests are slain. God sends rain in answer to Elijah's prayer.²⁶ But as Jezebel persecutes Elijah anew and the impress of the great deed at Carmel seems not to uproot Baalism, Elijah flees in discouragement to Horeb. There God reveals Himself as He that would finally help not by earthquake, fire, or storm, but by gentle regeneration. Elisha is named as Elijah's successor: for Elijah has laid down his work.²⁷ Ahab for a time listens to God's message and obtains victory over Ben-Hadad of Syria.²⁸ But he falls through his desire for Naboth's vineyard, when he succumbs to Jezebel's cruel determination. Naboth is unjustly killed. Ahab is justly denounced; but upon repentance the judgment is postponed by God.²⁹ Ahab enters into league with Jehoshaphat against Syria, falls and is conquered at the battle of Ramoth-Gilead, as foretold by Micaiah against the false prophets.³⁰

Summary.—This first book of the Kings shows the truth of the promise to David. God keeps His word, though disobedience and sin rend the kingdom. In this divine fidelity is revealed the guarantee of the future fulfillment of the coming of the Messiah, David's greatest Son.

The wisest king sins by worldliness and idolatry. These sins grow and corrupt both kingdoms. The northern kingdom, separated from the sanctuary and led mostly by idolatrous kings full of wickedness, degenerates more quickly than Judah despite great resources and power. Its moral corruption through idolatry is temporarily checked by the mighty exhibition of divine power through the pre-eminent prophet of the law's judgment and of divine retribution. But no saving change is effected thereby. The future help must come in the power of love, by which God does not break but regenerates through His still small voice.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The wisest sins without God.
2. Departure from worship in spirit and truth brings sin.
3. Idolatry is the source of much wickedness.
4. Evil rulers corrupt a nation.
5. God is never without a witness.
6. True regeneration comes not by law's power, but by love's redemption.

II KINGS.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A Baleful Friendship.—The second book of Kings continues the story of the baleful friendship of the two kingdoms. The story begins with Ahaziah, son of Ahab. He sends to Baal-Zebub at Ekron, and is told of his death by Elijah, who cannot be taken. Fire destroys those who would capture him with arms.¹ But his task is ended, a **1 1.** whirlwind with fiery chariot takes him to heaven, and Elisha receives of his spirit. Elisha shows his power by his wonderful return over the Jordan and by his healing of unwholesome water. The sternness of Elijah briefly flashes forth as the mockers are cursed to receive quick death.² In a contest, in which Jehoram of Israel, Jehoshaphat **2 2.** of Judah and the king of Edom go against Moab, they are shown water by Elisha and promised victory.³ Miraculously he helps a **3 3.** prophet's widow, brings to life the son of a Shunammite woman, heals deadly pottage, and feeds one hundred prophets' scholars.⁴ To Naaman **4 4.** of Syria he shows the way to health, but punishes his own lying and grasping servant Gehazi, by the leprosy of which Naaman is healed.⁵ **5 5.** To a poor prophet a borrowed axe is wonderfully restored.⁶ In a war **6 6, 1-7.** with Syria, the Syrians, who are to capture Elisha, are smitten with blindness, and he leads them into Samaria. But though dismissed in peace, they return and a great famine comes to Samaria. Elisha is to be killed.⁷ But he promises deliverance. Lepers find the Syrian **7 6. 8 ff.** camp empty, and a lord, who had doubted Elisha, is trampled to death in the gate as Elisha threatened.⁸ The Shunammite he helps to her **8 7.** property. To Hazael, in Damascus, he promises the Syrian kingdom. In Judah, wicked Jehoram reigns, and Edom revolts. Ahaziah, whose mother Athaliah is sister to Ahab, succeeds his father, is equally wicked, and friendly to Joram, of Israel, his uncle.⁹ Jehu, annointed **9 8.** upon Elisha's word, kills Joram, Ahaziah and Jezebel.¹⁰ **10 9.**

The Kingdoms in Conflict.—The two kingdoms come into conflict until Israel is destroyed. Jehu continues his murderous work against the house of Ahab, is strong against Baal-worship, but becomes idolatrous, and is succeeded by Jehoahaz.¹¹ In Judah Athaliah kills all the royal seed except Jehoash, who is rescued by his aunt, is raised to the throne in his seventh year by Jehoiada, the priest. Athaliah is killed.¹² Jehoash reigns well as long as Jehoiada lives. But the idolatrous high places are not removed, though the temple is repaired. Syria is paid out of the temple's treasure to avert a siege in Jerusalem. Jehoash, killed by his servants, is succeeded by Amaziah.¹³ In Israel Jehoahaz wickedly rules; but turning to God in prayer, is delivered from the oppression of Hazael. Over Hazael's successor, Ben-Hadad, Jehoash gains three victories, as foretold by Elisha at his death. Even Elisha's grave brings life to men, so great is his power.¹⁴ Amaziah of Judah, a good man, conquers the Edomites in the Valley of Salt. After the victory he contends against Jehoash, is worsted, and Jerusalem is plundered.¹⁵ Azariah, also called Uzziah, a great king, is smitten with leprosy. In Israel kings are quickly raised and slain. Zachariah is killed and succeeded by Shallum, who reigns but a month. Menahem kills him, and gives tribute to Egypt. Pekahiah follows. Pekah, who slays him, appeals to the Assyrian king, Tiglath-Pileser. Hoshea slays Pekah. Meantime Jotham reigns well in Judah, but is followed by Ahaz.¹⁶ In his wicked rule he is assailed by Pekah and Rezin, of Syria, against whom he stirs up the Assyrians. The altar is made after a heathen pattern, and the temple robbed; but king Hezekiah follows.¹⁷ Hoshea in Israel, forgetting Assyria, calls upon So of Egypt. Then Samaria is besieged and taken by Shalmaneser. Thus *falls the northern kingdom* by its shameful wickedness and idolatry.¹⁸

The Kingdom of Judah's Last Days.—Judah continues for two centuries more. Hezekiah, one of its best rulers, destroys much of idol worship. Sennacherib of Assyria, who comes against Judah, is for a time assuaged by a tribute, but later sends his messenger to blaspheme God and asks the people to revolt.¹⁹ Hezekiah praying to God is strengthened by Isaiah. Sennacherib sends a

boastful letter, but Isaiah tells the king that Assyria shall be humbled. And when Sennacherib besieges Jerusalem he is driven away by a pestilence. Afterward his sons slay him in the temple of Nisroch.²⁰ ²⁰ 19. Hezekiah in severe sickness receives longer life in answer to prayer, but when later in pride he shows his treasures to the messenger of the Babylonian king, Isaiah announces the Babylonian captivity to come. Manasseh succeeds.²¹ He is wicked, and the prophets testify against ²¹ 20. him. Amon, his son, who is still worse, is slain after a short reign, and is followed by Josiah.²² He was the noblest king of Judah. In the ²² 21. eighteenth year of his reign, Hilkiah finds the book of the law in the temple. The king deeply moved by its threats, mourns. Huldah, the prophetess, announces life to him, but final destruction to the people, who do not hear.²³ The covenant is renewed, the passover is ²³ 22. kept, all idolatry is completely eradicated. The idol-altars are defiled by dead men's bones. But in a battle against Nechoh of Egypt Josiah falls in Megiddo, deeply lamented.²⁴ Jehoahaz is taken away by ²⁴ 23. 1-30. Pharoah, who raises wicked Jehoiakim to the throne.²⁵ The latter is ²⁵ 23. 31 ff. subdued by the king of Babylon, but rebels and is removed. Jehoia- chin succeeds. The Egyptian king is conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, who also takes Jerusalem and deports ungodly Jehoiachin and many nobles to Babylon. Zedekiah is made king, but soon rebels.²⁶ Jeru- ²⁶ 24. salem is now again besieged, taken, and the remnant of its inhabitants taken to Babylon. Gedaliah is made ruler over a few that remain, but he is slain and his slayers flee to Egypt. Zedekiah's sons are slain and his eyes put out in Babylon. Jehoiachin lives, and is advanced to favor by the later king Evil-Merodach.²⁷ ²⁷ 25.

Summary.—The breaking down of both kingdoms does away with the hope of an earthly kingdom. Israel falls by accommodation to heathen religion and wickedness. The necessity of a spiritual kingdom, which is not of this world, is indicated.

The prophetic power of Elijah is supplemented by the milder, helpful, saving work of Elisha, whose life at the beginning of the book, that tells of the end of both kingdoms, is the gleam of hope in darkness. The history of Israel and Judah shows the idolatrous corruption of the people, which is retarded in Judah for a time by kings who seek

to reform. Their work is generally destroyed by their successors. Israel as a whole does not enter into true reform. It grows in every vice. As it becomes a carcass the eagles gather.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God gives power to His servants to save men.
2. Sin destroys a nation.
3. Even good rulers cannot save a corrupt people.
4. Where God is forsaken every vice flourishes.
5. Destruction of the wicked is a necessity of judgment and a saving of mankind.
6. God's kingdom is not of this world.

I AND II CHRONICLES.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Characteristics.—These two books, which form one work and were not divided until the Greek translators of the Old Testament arranged them in two parts, do not present a general history like the books of Kings. They simply furnish a sketch of the kingdom of David, Solomon and the kings of Judah until the destruction of the kingdom. Because of this selective character the Jews placed these books in the third class of their writings, the Hagiographa.* Earnest in style, and sustained in dignity, they do not rise to vivid pictures like the books of Kings. Nevertheless they do not become monotonous despite the mass of genealogical and chronological detail. The linguistic forms are late, for the books were written after the return from the exile. Many sources are mentioned; annalistic histories of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel;¹ general words of prophets,² special collections of sayings of Samuel,³ Gad, Nathan, Ahijah, Shemaiah, Iddo, Jehu,⁵ and of Isaiah.⁶ Though acts of David and his chronicles are mentioned,⁷ yet there is no convincing proof that the books of Samuel or Kings have been directly used in writing Chronicles. Often in very similar passages there are additions which point to independent sources.

Genealogical Tables.—Truly oriental, the books open with genealogies.⁸ They begin with Adam, and first pass through Abraham and Isaac to his sons, Edom and Israel. Edom's descendants are then told of, so that the unimportant line is finished.⁹ The descent of the main line passes to the sons of Israel and the families of Judah. David's sons and descendants are then mentioned.¹⁰ In an appendix Simeon, his family, and the trans-Jordanic tribes are

- ¹ 1 Chr. 9. 1.
² 2 Chr. 16. 11;
25. 26; 27. 7;
33. 18.
³ 2 Chr. 33. 13.
⁴ 1 Chr. 29. 29.
⁵ 2 Chr. 9. 29;
12. 15; 13. 22
⁶ 2 Chr. 20. 34.
⁷ 2 Chr. 26. 22;
32. 32.
⁸ 1 Chr. 27. 24;
29. 29.
⁹ 1-9.
¹⁰ 2-4. 23.

* Holy Writings.

¹¹ 4. 24—5. 26. treated.¹¹ The priests, Levites and their cities are recounted.¹² The
¹² 6. rest of the tribes are outlined genealogically with the omission of Dan and Zebulun. With a more careful account of Benjamin Saul is
¹³ 7, 8. approached.¹³ The former inhabitants of Jerusalem are brought in,
¹⁴ 9. but then the lists again return to the house of Saul.¹⁴ This long genealogical approach to the main story is part of the ideal position taken by the writer. He desires to show Israel's connection with all mankind, its selection by God, His preservation of it, and His guidance into the land of promise, to prepare for the Kingdom. Such lessons were needed after the return from the exile. They would strengthen Israel to remember their beginning, and the providential help of the past would make them hopeful for the future.

The Life and Work of David.—Its first and largest inspiration Israel was to draw from the life and work of David.¹⁵ Saul and his house soon passed away because of Saul's sin.¹⁶ David becomes king of all Israel.¹⁷ His regal power is first shown. Mighty heroes, leaders, and strong forces gather about him.¹⁸ But he uses this influence for spiritual ends. The ark once left in Kirjath-Jearim¹⁹ is to be taken to Jerusalem. This could now be done; for fortunate as David was in his home and family, so also he was favored in friendship with the king of Tyre, and had twice conquered the Philistines.²⁰ With all solemnity and joy the Levites, led by David, bring the ark.²¹ Many sacrifices are offered, and hymns of thanksgiving are sung, in which David leads in a psalm of which traces occur in Ps. 96, 105, 106. Many priests and musicians are appointed for the service.²² But David desires to build a permanent temple.²³ Now wars arise with Philistia, Moab, and Ammon.²⁴ The war-king ought not build the temple of peace. Satan misleads him to number the people. A pestilence arises as punishment. Yet by repentance David is divinely led to select the place for the temple.²⁵ He enters upon the preparation of those matters which mark his spiritual rule. The temple is to be built and Solomon is instructed as to it.²⁶ Solomon is now made king, and the priests, with their twenty-four divisions and their families; the Levites, the singers, and the porters for the temple are enumerated.²⁷ Then once more civil and military officers are recounted.²⁸

David in solemn assembly gives to Solomon the material for the temple which he has gathered, speaks of God's favor to him and his house, encourages the princes to bring their offerings for the temple, and with thanksgiving proceeds to bless the people. Solomon is now fully king, and soon David dies.²⁹

²⁹ 28, 29.

The Reign of Solomon.—The second book opens with Solomon's reign.³⁰ He is first shown sacrificing at Gilboa, and obtaining wisdom from God in answer to prayer. For this choice there are added

³⁰ ch. 1-9.

also great power and wealth.³¹ His main work is the building of the

³¹ 1.

temple.³² From Hiram of Tyre Solomon obtains further material

³² 2-7.

and workmen³³ to build the temple with all its ornaments, the

³³ 2.

cherubim, veil and pillars,³⁴ the altar of brass, molten sea, lavers,

³⁴ 3.

candlesticks, tables,³⁵ the other treasures and the ark, upon all of

³⁵ 4.

which God causes His glory to fall.³⁶ With a prayer Solomon dedi-

³⁶ 5.

cates the temple,³⁷ and God answers by fire to the many sacrifices of

³⁷ 6.

Solomon, who adds the Great Dedication to the festival of Taber-

nacles.³⁸ Solomon's magnificent palaces, the power, wealth, and

³⁸ 7.

glory of his reign, which attracts the Queen of Sheba, are described.³⁹

³⁹ 8, 9.

After this glory there follows, from the point of view of fidelity to

God and His worship, the history of Judah to the exile.⁴⁰ There

⁴⁰ ch. 10-36.

are mentioned Rehoboam,⁴¹ Abijah,⁴² Asa,⁴³ Jehoshaphat,⁴⁴ Jeho-

⁴¹ 10, 12.

⁴² 13.

ram,⁴⁵ Ahaziah, Athaliah,⁴⁶ Joash,⁴⁷ Amaziah,⁴⁸ Uzziah,⁴⁹ Jotham,⁵⁰

⁴³ 14-16.

⁴⁴ 17-20.

Ahaz,⁵¹ Hezekiah,⁵² Manasseh, Amon,⁵³ Josiah.⁵⁴ Then follow the last

⁴⁵ 21.

⁴⁶ 22, 23.

⁴⁷ 24.

⁴⁸ 25.

⁴⁹ 26.

⁵⁰ 27.

⁵¹ 28.

⁵² 29-32.

⁵³ 33.

⁵⁴ 34, 35.

⁵⁵ 36.

kings, Israel's banishment, and the permission of Cyrus to return.⁵⁵

The Purpose of these books of Chronicles is wholly didactic.

The religious side and the ideal side only of the history are

exhibited. Nothing is related of David's seven years' reign in

Hebron, of his relation to the house of Saul, of his dark family history,

his adultery, the sin of Ammon, the revolt of Absalom. Similarly in

Solomon's reign his idolatry and polygamy are not recounted. Thus

the lives of all the good kings are regarded from their noblest point

of view. Figures are large. But in this picture there is no untruth.

Other books give the other aspect. It was the aim of the writer to

exhibit the ideal in the sad times of the return from exile. Therefore

the centre of the history is Judah, and the centre of Judah is Jeru-

salem. The priestly and ecclesiastical are emphasized in the whole history. All that pertains to the temple and worship is prominent. In this form was to be taught the lesson of fidelity to God. The people that returned could not found a commonwealth, and embody the old ideals in it. Therefore these ideals were shown in the worship, which was not hindered and was within the free activity of the restorers of Israel. But in teaching that idolatry and defection from the central worship at Jerusalem were the great sin, a true lesson was inculcated, which touched the source of the evil, and reached the core of the sin of Israel. In showing God's blessing upon those who observed His law and held to His worship, He is portrayed as present in history just as He is present in worship. Therefore Israel as it returned was to reconnect with the worship that taught God's dwelling among men. And this truth though clad in many forms was prophetic. It was to lead to the indwelling of God in the hearts of the people and to that presence which found truest embodiment in Christ.

Summary.—God's plan in the history of salvation is ideal. As men live up to it, they are good. The abandonment of God's ancient worship was to deny Him and His presence. The truth of His presence was constantly needed to prepare men for the coming of the Messiah.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. To speak well of men when possible is a Christian duty.
2. God's work in history is the ideal one.
3. The abandonment of God's law and worship is the cause of failure.
4. Fidelity to God alone preserves.
5. God dwells among His people.
6. His greatest presence is in His own Son.

EZRA.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Style and Authorship.—Ezra and Nehemiah were originally one book of which the present book of Ezra was the first part. The language used in Ezra is similar to that of Nehemiah, as it is also to Chronicles, though it contains words and expressions peculiarly its own. It is exact in dates and careful in genealogies. The influence of the painstaking, minute scribe is evident. A part of Ezra was written in Aramaic,* particularly that which contains the official documents of the Persian kings. There is no cogent reason to deny that Ezra, the priest and scribe, wrote this book. In the parts admittedly written by him, the style—formal, exact, minute—agrees with the other portions of the book. There is at times a transition from the first to the third person, that seems strange to a Western reader. But this usage is characteristic of oriental style, and is found in other writings of the Old Testament. The statements of Ezra, fragmentary as they are, prove to be of great historical value for the period of Israel's restoration to its own land.

Its Two Parts.—A space of almost eighty years is covered by Ezra. His account begins with the edict of Cyrus 536 B. C., and it extends to the seventeenth year of Artaxerxes, 458 B. C. Two main parts are comprised in Ezra: the history of events which occurred before Ezra's residence at Jerusalem,¹ for which Ezra drew upon other accounts, reports, etc.; and the later developments under Ezra's personal presence.²

The Return to Palestine.—An edict of Cyrus, king of Persia, permits the Jews once deported to Babylon into captivity, to return to their native land and to Jerusalem. There they are to rebuild their temple: for Cyrus holds, that God charged him to build

* A Semitic dialect spoken by the Jews in later times.

Him a house at Jerusalem. Those who do not carry out this edict are to assist with free-will offerings of silver and gold.³ The heads and fathers of Judah and Benjamin, together with priests and Levites, and many others, moved by the Spirit of God, prepare to return to Jerusalem. The vessels of the temple, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away, are numbered and given by Cyrus to Israel's main prince, Sheshbazzar (Zerubbabel).⁴ A minute list and the number of all the priests, Levites, servants and others are reported according to their families and with their possessions. The whole number of those returning is 42,360.⁵ When Jerusalem is reached, the altar of burnt-offering is erected by Joshua, the priest, and the first sacrifices are brought. The first festival celebrated is that of Tabernacles. Then are the foundations of the temple begun amid joyous hope and glad song for God's goodness, but also with the tears and mourning of those who remembered the first temple. The shouts of joy and the noise of weeping could not be distinguished.⁶

Rebuilding.—The Samaritans who desired to join in the work were not accepted because of their impure faith. Then they attempt to hinder the Jews,⁷ and send messengers to Cyrus; later they write to Ahasuerus, and afterward to Artaxerxes a letter in Aramaic. He stops the work of building.⁸ But the account continues in Aramaic and tells how through the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, Zerubbabel and Joshua again begin. Tatnai, the Persian governor, is not satisfied, and writes to inquire of Darius whether the Jews had received permission from Cyrus as they claimed.⁹ Upon search Darius confirms the decree of Cyrus, and orders aid to be given the Jews.¹⁰ The Jews, therefore, complete the temple and hold a joyous passover.¹¹

Ezra at Jerusalem.—For fifty-six years nothing is recorded. Then Ezra goes up with another band of Jews to establish the worship¹² allowed by a decree of Artaxerxes reported in Aramaic.¹³ For this Ezra praises God.¹⁴ His companions are mentioned. He appoints ministers for the temple, orders a fast, delivers up further vessels which had been given him with his royal commission.¹⁵ Earnestly Ezra begins reform. Those who have taken heathen wives are sepa-

rated from the congregation.¹⁶ Those who obeyed and dismissed their¹⁶ 9. 1—
 heathen wives are then enumerated.¹⁷ 10. 17.
 17 10. 18-44.

Not a Complete History.—It is evident that no complete history of the resettlement of Judah is contemplated. Many occurrences which must have taken place at the first return and until Ezra's coming are not told. Apparently no annals were kept. The exiles who came first are merely mentioned, and at once the account passes to the gifts for the temple. The largest space is used to tell of the erection of the altar, the beginning of the work on the temple, the great hindrances of this work and their removal, the completion and joyous dedication of the temple. Everything, as in Chronicles, turns finally about the worship and the temple. Similarly Ezra in the description of his own experiences gives a detailed account of all the preparation of his coming, of the priests and Levites who accompanied him, of the treasures brought for the temple. All this is seen under the light of royal favor, divinely granted. But of Ezra's work at Jerusalem, only a very full description of the purification of the Jews from heathen alliances is furnished. Certainly Ezra did much more. He had power to appoint magistrates. With Nehemiah also he co-worked for a long time. Nehemiah had arrived at Jerusalem thirteen years later than Ezra.

The Purpose of Ezra.—It is clear that the purpose of Ezra, the scribe, was to describe mainly the restoration of the temple and its worship, and the preparation of Israel to be a holy people for worship by removing heathenism. The whole aim of Israel's return is put in this light. And to show it thus was fundamental. The restoration of the temple; of its worship and the separation from the heathen were first necessary. Only if Israel became holy and observed God's law could it again be a blessing to all nations.

Summary.—God moved the heart of the great kings of the world to permit Israel's return. The world's history and its rulers must serve God's kingdom. The enemies, who would hinder the feeble Israelites, are overcome and must advance the cause which they would thwart. God carries out His work through great leaders, priests, prophets, scribes. His temple is again to be built. And to

the temple is to come the Lord and Deliverer. The restoration of Israel is the preparation for the Redeemer and the Redemption of the world.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The kingdoms of the world must serve God's kingdom.
2. The Lord contends for His own.
3. God's enemies must help Him.
4. Outward blessings are valuable only in the light of inward redemption.

NEHEMIAH—ESTHER.

CHAPTER XXXV.

NEHEMIAH.

The Characteristics.—The book of Nehemiah bears the exact title “The Deeds of Nehemiah.” It is written in a style of its own, and contains many words and phrases not in Ezra. The narrative is not connected throughout, but often in the midst of a personal account historical, topographical and genealogical matters are introduced. Short prayers are also often interspersed. In part of the book the personality of Ezra is given large place. No personal pronoun points to Nehemiah. Nevertheless it is probable that Nehemiah wrote the whole book. He used documents and compiled a book, which was not to be his diary or biography, but a gathering of certain facts and accounts to illustrate the time and manner of Israel’s restoration. Nehemiah mentions his own deeds to aid this purpose.

The Walls of Jerusalem Rebuilt.—There are three main parts. The *first*¹ tells of the building of the gates and walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah’s direction. Nehemiah, son of Hachaliah, a butler at Shushan, hears from his brother Hanani, and some other men of Judah, about the wretched, defenceless condition of Jerusalem. He is filled with sadness, and, with fasting, appeals to God’s mercy for the restoration of Israel.² The Persian king, noticing Nehemiah’s sadness, inquires, is told the cause, and when asked permits Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem to build the city of his fathers’ sepulchres. Upon request letters are furnished Nehemiah to the governors, that he may take timber from the royal forests. Despite Israel’s enemies Nehemiah succeeds. Accompanied by soldiers and horsemen he comes to Jerusalem, and soon after his arrival inspects by night the broken walls. The elders of the Jews are incited to aid in rebuilding.³ Then there are given the names and the order of the

¹ ch. 1 6.

² 1.

³ 2.

4 3. men and families who helped to rebuild the walls.⁴ In this work hindrances arise. Enemies, Sanballat, Tobiah with Arabians and Ammonites seek to prevent the building. The Jews as they were
 5 4. building had therefore also to be armed and to set watches.⁵ The people are also oppressed by the mortgages of usurers. These Nehemiah compels to make restitution, and aids the people with personal
 3 5. gifts.⁶ Sanballat plots against Nehemiah's life, seeks also to terrify him, and makes secret arrangements with some of Israel's nobles.
 7 6. But all such plans are in vain. The walls are finished.⁷ These occurrences seem to cover about one year, from 445 to 444 B. C.

8 7-12. 43. **Order Restored.**—The *second part*⁸ shows the further work of Nehemiah for the defense and upbuilding of Israel. The city of
 9 7. 1-4. Jerusalem is put under guards,⁹ and Israel is to be increased. The elders, the nobles and the people are called, that a genealogy might
 10 7. 5. be obtained.¹⁰ Then a document is found of the families which came originally with Jerubabel and Joshua, which is copied,¹¹ and of which
 11 7. 6-63. explanations are added.¹² In the seventh month the people are gathered to hear the law read by Ezra and to keep the feast of tabernacles.¹³
 12 7. 64-73. A fast is to be held, at which the Levites for the people confess God's goodness and Israel's sin.¹⁴ The covenant is renewed and sealed by
 13 8. Nehemiah, the princes, priests, heads of families, which are enumerated. The offerings to be given are then regulated.¹⁵ The rulers and
 14 9. the people, one out of ten, who are to dwell in Jerusalem are chosen by lot.¹⁶ Then follow as dwellers lists of families and their heads,¹⁷
 15 10. and also an enumeration of priests and of Levites, who came up from the first.¹⁸ The solemn dedication of the city walls is now held.¹⁹

16 11. 1, 2.
 17 11. 3-36.
 18 12. 1-26.
 19 12. 27-43.
 20 12. 44—
 13. 31.
 21 12. 44—
 13. 3.
 The *third part*²⁰ tells, after some arrangements of worship and the reading of the law,²¹ how Nehemiah returned a second time from Shushan, to which he had gone in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes. He cast forth Tobiah for whom Eliashib, the priest, had made a chamber in God's temple. The tithes are arranged, the marriages with heathen stopped, the sanctity of the Sabbath enforced, and abuses corrected, which had crept in during Nehemiah's absence.²²

22 13. 4-31.

Summary.—The writing of Nehemiah complements that of Ezra. It relates what Nehemiah did for the establishment of the

civil order in conjunction with the religious work of Ezra. Israel, with restored faith, was to have God's protection also in outward life. Its arrangements served to prepare the people of the Lord for the last great revelation of the Son.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Where faith is established civil order will follow.
 2. Those that turn to God He blesses also outwardly.
 3. Church and state, separate as they now must be, ought to co-work for the same end of order.
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ESTHER.

Its Character.—The book of Esther is very striking and graphic. It presents pictures well wrought out and finished. Characters are vividly portrayed by their words and acts without description. The whole action is dramatic. The style is chaste and simple, and the sentences are clear. Among the vocabulary of this late book are Aramaic and Persian terms.

Its Contents.—Ahasuerus makes a great feast, to which Vashti, the queen, is bidden to show her beauty. She refuses, and is degraded, that other women may not imitate her disobedience.²³ The ²³ 1. king, when his wrath abates, had the most beautiful virgins brought to the palace. From them he selects Esther, a Jewess, and relative of Mordecai, a Benjaminite. Mordecai still visits Esther when queen, and incidentally discovers a plot against the king.²⁴ Haman becomes ²⁴ 2. minister of state, and demands great obeisance. This Mordecai piously refuses. Haman is enraged, plans to kill Mordecai and all Jews, and selects by lot (pur) the thirteenth day of the twelfth month to massacre the Jews.²⁵ Mordecai moves Esther to intercede ²⁵ 3. for Israel. At the risk of her life, she enters the throne-room, is graciously received, and invites the king and Haman to a dinner.²⁶ ²⁶ 4-5. 8. Haman, delighted, leaves the palace. Mordecai at the door does not

27 5. 9-14.

bow. Haman determines to hang him next day.²⁶ That night the king is sleepless, has the annals read, and finds that Mordecai has not been rewarded for discovering the plot against the king. Haman comes early to ask permission to hang Mordecai. The king asks Haman, what shall be done to the man, whom the king wishes to honor. Haman supposes this to be himself, and advises royal honor. He is bidden to give this to Mordecai. Haman's wife sees the begin-

28 6.

ning of his fall.²⁸ Now the dinner with Esther takes place. She denounces Haman and his decree to kill the Jews. The king, enraged, goes into the garden. When he returns he finds Haman kneeling before the queen. The king supposes that Haman, who begged for his life, contemplated violence, and has him hanged on the gallows erected for Mordecai.²⁹ Mordecai is raised to Haman's place.³⁰ A

29 7.

30 8. 1, 2.

new edict is made that the Jews may avenge themselves upon their attackers.³¹ They kill many thousands and institute *Purim*, as a yearly

31 8. 3-17.

32 9.

celebration of their delivery.³² Mordecai's administration is marked

33 10.

by glorious deeds.³³

The Purpose of the book of Esther, which does not mention God and in which the direct religious element is small, is to explain the origin of the festival of Purim. It glorifies the Jews as God's own people and shows their triumph. They are hated and opposed, but remain. No one can finally withstand them. The intense love for Israel rests on great promises. God keeps Israel for a purpose. Out of it is to come the Saviour. After His coming it is kept for salvation before the last day. In this preservation God is true to His covenant.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God will not have Israel destroyed.
2. He has kept it for Christ's birth.
3. He is keeping it to save the remnant.
4. God is faithful though all men be liars.

JOB.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Its Character.—The book of Job, in contrast with the strictly Jewish book of Esther, strikes a keynote of universality. Job belongs to Israel's literature of wisdom, which touches problems of humanity. Broader than all other books and free from reference to Israel's history, it is also the deepest book of the Old Testament. It looks boldly into first principles. With vigor and delicacy characters stand forth in this ancient dialogue and drama. The historical narrative is simple, clear, rapid in movement. The discussions, which are poetry, combine vehement, passionate outbursts, brilliant images with calm, earnest contemplation. Wonderful pictures of life and nature are seen as complete in bold outline as in delicate, minute touches. The greatest poets have been inspired by Job, whose large plan is carried out with highest art and perfect naturalness. The language is as peculiar and many-sided as the book. Arabic, as well as archaic and Aramaic terms are largely found. It is possible that Job was written in the wide outlook of the age of Solomon. An ancient and perhaps an Arabic story of Job was made the foundation of inquiry into the great question: *Why does the righteous man suffer?*

The Prologue¹ shows Job, pious and wealthy,² accused of selfishness and insincerity by Satan before God. God permits Satan to try Job, whose wealth, children and health are taken away. But Job remains patient.³ His friends come. After silence, Job curses the day of his birth, but does not deny God.⁴ The weakness of Job moves his friends to accuse him.

The Cause of Suffering.—There ensues a great contest about the cause of Job's sufferings.⁵ In three attempts his friends seek to bring Job to acknowledge his guilt, but he asserts ever more strongly his innocence.

- ⁶ 4-14. **Job and His Three Friends.**—The *first attempt* ⁶ opens with the assertion of Eliphaz, that before God Almighty no man is just.
- ⁷ 4, 5. Job as a sinner ought to submit to divine punishment.⁷ Job complains how great and incomprehensible to him are his sufferings. God seems a severe spy.⁸ Bildad affirms: God is just. He punishes only the wicked.⁹ Job feels God's might and struggles against the thought of God's arbitrariness.¹⁰ Why has God created man to destroy him?¹¹ Zophar now emphasizes God's wisdom, which searches out even hidden sin.¹² Job asserts his knowledge of God's wisdom and power to be superior to that of his friends, but his lot is undeserved. He puts his cause before God, and is silent when no answer comes.¹³
- ¹³ 12-14. In the *second attempt* ¹⁴ Job's friends seek to intimidate him. Eliphaz calls Job's words foolish, and portrays the lot of the wicked.¹⁵ Job answers that this description is not new. He is attacked mercilessly by God and men. Yet he calls upon God as witness, and determines to remain just and sincere.¹⁶ Bildad shows the wicked clearly, and roughly points to Job.¹⁷ Job laments his sad state. Still, though God wounds him, he will call to God, and is assured of an avenger, who will proclaim his innocence after his death, when he shall see God.¹⁸ In this hope of the avenger there is an outlook upon the Redeemer and His life. Zophar illustrates the destruction of the wicked by the example of a rich man, who robbed others.¹⁹ To this Job replies that sinners often are prosperous to their death. The words of his friends are vapor.²⁰
- ²⁰ 21. In their *third attempt* ²¹ Job's friends are brought to silence. Eliphaz asserts Job's sins and begs him, after the example of other unbelievers, to come to repentance.²² Job complains that he cannot place his case before God.²³ God's ways are mysterious; the oppressed perish, sinners flourish.²⁴ Bildad answers: "Before God no creature is pure, least of all man."²⁵ Job affirms God's exaltedness,²⁶ and closes the discussion.²⁷ He is innocent. God's judgment will come upon the wicked.²⁸ God's wisdom is hidden from the natural eye, but for man fear of God and avoidance of evil are wisdom.²⁹
- ²⁵ 25.
²⁶ 26.
²⁷ 27, 28.
²⁸ 27.
²⁹ 28.

Solution of the Problem.—Job now addresses God, and the solution of the problem begins.³⁰ He thinks of his former state, his

³⁰ 29-31.

fortune, and God's pleasure in his piety.³¹ But what misery is his ³¹ 29.
now? ³² Solemnly before God he affirms his innocence.³³ ³² 30.
³³ 31.

Upon this statement begins the human answer through Elihu.³⁴ ³⁴ 32-37.
Elihu shows how sufferings reveal the sins of man's heart. They are
educative chastisements from God. This is a partly true answer, and
leads naturally to God's final reply. Elihu claims, against the wis-
dom of the older men, to have God's spirit ³⁵ He corrects Job for ³⁵ 32.
his words, and calls suffering the work of God for man's education.³⁶ ³⁶ 33.
God is just, as nature and history prove.³⁷ God cannot be called to ³⁷ 34.
account. He must be besought.³⁸ Mighty as He is, He despises not ³⁸ 35.
man. The chastised one is to be converted; only the hardened heart
is without salvation.³⁹ Glorious and mighty is God in the works of ³⁹ 36.
nature! Who dare master Him? ⁴⁰ ⁴⁰ 37.

God Speaks.—God appears and answers.⁴¹ In His first reply,⁴² ⁴¹ 38-42.
He asks Job to behold all the problems of animate and inanimate ⁴² 38-40. 5
creation, which show *His wisdom*. Job promises never again to speak
against God. In His second reply,⁴³ God unfolds His righteousness, ⁴³ 40. 6-
and ironically asks Job to govern the world. In the contemplation of ⁴² 6.
two mighty creatures, Job is shown his helplessness.

Finally,⁴⁴ God corrects Job's friends for their wrong words, and ⁴⁴ 42. 7 ff.
restores to Job wealth, *many children*, and blesses him with *long life*.

The Final Answer of God then is, that *sufferings are the way*
to greater glory. This is seen only in earthly colors in the book of Job,
while the future solution of eternal life is merely indicated.⁴⁵ On the ⁴⁵ 19. 25.
way to glory the *righteous is tried*. This trial brings out the good in him.
He proves to be gold, turning to God even in his doubts, faithful, and
seeking rest in God. But in the trial, sins are also revealed. The
righteous murmurs, and is impatient. He needs *chastisements*. These
remove the dross, and refine the gold. Sins are purged away, faith
becomes stronger. This result shows that the sufferings of the right-
eous are not from God's wrath, but from *His love*, in which He chas-
tisethe every son He loveth. The submission to sufferings is also a
testimony before men and Satan, that there is unselfishness and sin-
cerity. Though God destroy the righteous he will hope in God. Thus
Satan is defeated. The individual experience leads to a larger out-

look. There is a contest of evil and good in this world, which cannot be ended without the suffering of the just. The fulfillment is brought in Christ, Who, the Just One, suffered for the unjust, and gave His life as a ransom. The cross is the final and full answer of the hoping glimpses of the Old Testament.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The good often suffer.
2. Their trials make them better.
3. Their sins are cleansed away.
4. By their faith they witness.
5. Sufferings of the good lead to glory.
6. God is just, wise, and loving, even when we do not feel it.
7. Jesus Christ, who suffered for us, brings forgiveness and thus every consolation.

PSALMS.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Their Structure.—The Psalms form the most complete collection of mighty, inspired *Hebrew poetry*. Fragments of poetry are found in many books of the Old Testament;* and the dialogues of Job, Proverbs, the Song of Songs and the Lamentations of Jeremiah are poetry. The real characteristic of Hebrew poetry is the rythmic expression of thought by two or more clauses. This is called “parallelism of members.” The thought may be the same (synonym),¹ or opposite (antithetic),² or thoughts may be combined in a causal or other way (synthetic).³ The most simple form is that with two clauses; but three⁴ or four⁵ clauses also occur. Some poems⁶ are alphabetic, verses or sections beginning with the successive letters of the alphabet. Some psalms⁷ repeat the thought of the beginning at certain intervals or the end; these are called envelope psalms.⁸

¹ *e. g.*, Ps. 2. 3.

² *e. g.*, Ps. 1. 6.

³ *e. g.*, Ps. 116. 1.

⁴ *e. g.*, Ps. 6. 6.

⁵ *e. g.*, Ps. 18.

⁶ *e. g.*, Ps. 119.

⁷ *e. g.*, Ps. 8.

⁸ *e. g.*, Ps. 8.

Hymns.—The psalms are hymns, and their superscriptions, which are probably of later origin, contain directions for the chief musician† about the instruments,‡ the voices§ and certain melodies.|| The frequent ‘Selah’ seems to mark a pause in singing, and an interlude for the instruments. At times the occasion¶

* *e. g.*, Gen. 4. 23; 9. 25 ff.; 27. 27 ff.; 49. 1 ff.; Ex. 15. 1 ff.; Num. 6. 24 ff.; Deut. 32. 1 ff.; Joshua 10. 12 ff.; 1 Sam. 2. 1 ff.; 2 Sam. 1. 19; Is. 5. 1 ff.; 12; 24. 15; 38. 9 ff.; Ez. 7. 5; Jonah 2. 1 ff.; Hab. 3. 1; etc.

† *e. g.*, Ps. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, etc. This heading in fifty-five Psalms.

‡ *e. g.*, Neginoth,⁹ stringed instruments; Nehiloth,¹⁰ the flutes.

⁹ Ps. 4.

¹⁰ Ps. 5.

§ Alamothe, in the manner of virgins (soprano).

|| Muthlabben,¹¹ “death makes white;” Aljelethshahar,¹² “hind of the morning;” Shoshanim,¹³ “lillies.” The meaning of many of these terms is doubtful.

¹¹ Ps. 9.

¹² Ps. 22.

¹³ Ps. 45.

¶ *e. g.*, 7, 34, 52, 56, 57, 63, 142. Ps. 120-134, of degrees, perhaps sung on the festival pilgrimages to Jerusalem.

which called forth a psalm is given, and the special character marked.*

¹⁴ 73 Psalms.
¹⁵ 90th Psalm.

¹⁶ Ps. 72,
127.

¹⁷ Ps. 50, 73,
77, 78,
80-82.

¹⁸ Ps. 89.

¹⁹ Ps. 39, 62,
77.

²⁰ Ps. 88.

²¹ Ps. 42,
44-49, 84,
85, 87.

Their Authors.—The authors are David,¹⁴ Moses,¹⁵ Solomon,¹⁶

Asaph, a Levite and chief musician of David,¹⁷ Ethan, the Ezrahite,¹⁸ perhaps the same as Jeduthun,¹⁹ and Heman, the Ezrahite,²⁰ who may have composed some of the psalms for the sons of Korah, a family of singers.²¹

The Psalms of David, marking most clearly the character of these hymns as prayers, show the inner life and faith of David. His earliest psalms† are voiced with mighty feeling. In abrupt changes, and in vivid pictures of power, like rock, fortress, shield, battles, ambush, pits, lions, expression is given to his deep sense of innocence, his intense devotion and trust, his strong sense of personal nobleness, his earnest hate of the enemies of the Lord. Time brings an easier flow of language, a fuller vocabulary, an easier, more polished style,‡ with an increase of descriptive power. But the spirit of devotion increases in depth, earnestness and warmth. The Lord is proclaimed as King, whose dominion shall cover the world, which He made. David feels his kingly responsibility before God. Against the enemies he is determined. The guilty shall not come to God's holy mountain. Great, wonderful is God's might and majesty. When David falls his psalms§ change. They become penitential psalms and enter into the human heart with intense power. In deepest agony and abasement sin is laid bare; its sufferings and punishments are incomparably portrayed. Guilt is felt, spirit and body are prostrated by outward calamities and plots of friends. But while the spirit is thus broken, David becomes more lovingly persuasive, sympathetic, and touches the inmost heart. He never surrenders the knowledge of his high office, his generous, unselfish love for Israel,

²² Ps. 16, 56,
57, etc.
²³ Ps. 32, 42,
44, etc.

* Michtam,²² perhaps "a golden treasure;" maschil,²³ a psalm of instruction; the heading "a psalm" in fifty-seven psalms (Hebrew, mizmor) is restricted to religious hymns; the title "song" (Hebrew, shir) is a general word for song.

† Probably Psalms 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 17, 22, 34, 35, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59.

‡ See Ps. 9, 10, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 36, 58, 60, 68, 101, 108, 110.

§ Ps. 5, 6, 32, 38, 39, 40, 41, 51, 55, 64.

his firm and hopeful trust in God. At the time of his flight he sings,* with deep susceptibility, of God's continued help and presence, His protection, His goodness that shall again enable the afflicted to offer sacrifices of joy. In his latest psalms † David realizes most fully God's all-pervading presence and his own dependence. His heart is pardoned, cleansed, renewed. Let all creatures join him in blessing the Lord. While the other psalms cannot fully compare with David's, yet they also voice in strong and pleasing form, in pictures of power and grace, deep petitions and mighty praises.

Five Books.—The Psalms, thus arising from individual life and sometimes out of the life of the nation, in its trials and for its festivals, were collected. They form five books. The *first book* ending with the 41st Psalm, embraces mainly the hymns of David, beginning with Ps. 3. The 1st and 2d Psalm were affixed later as headings for the whole collection. The *second book*, opening with Psalms from the hymn-book of the sons of Korah,²⁴ included other ²⁴Ps. 42-49. psalms of David, and ended with the 72d Psalm. It was thought that here David's songs would end. But later a *third book* was gathered.²⁵ Finally the *fourth* was added,²⁶ and soon after the *fifth*.²⁷ ²⁵Ps. 73-89.
²⁶Ps. 90-106.
²⁷Ps. 107-150.
There are some late psalms of the exile, and therefore the collection could not have been closed sooner.

Their Moral Problems.—The Psalms present two moral problems. The first is the assertion of innocence. This is no self-righteousness, but always includes knowledge of sin. It means freedom from great transgression, and finally appeals to God and trusts in Him because of His promise. The second and more apparent moral problem arises in connection with the strong spirit of vindictiveness, praying for the terrible destruction of enemies. ‡ But these prayers are meant as a contest in God's behalf, even in their most personal statements. They breathe the fierceness of the law, and are to be judged by their own age and purpose, and not by the spirit of gentle

* See Ps. 3, 4, 27, 28, 31, 61, 63, 69, 70, 143.

† See *c. g.* Ps. 103, 139.

‡ *c. g.*, Ps. 7, 59, 63, 69, 109.

28 Luke 9. 55.

love first revealed by Christ.²⁰ There is also justice and holiness with God, Who is a consuming fire.

Classes of Psalms.—The Psalms may be divided in their religious value into: (*Didactic* psalms, in which the divine Spirit, through human experience, portrays good and evil men,* exalts God's law,† shows the vanity of human life ‡ and urges the duty of rulers; § into hymns of *praise* for God's goodness to Israel,|| to all good men,¶ for His mercies to individuals,** and His attributes;†† and into psalms specially *devotional*, expressing penitence,‡‡ trust in trials,§§ sorrow with hope,||| deep distress,¶¶ deprivation of religious privileges,*** desire for help,††† and intercession.‡‡‡ Three psalms §§§ are largely historical.

Messianic Psalms.—Of highest interest are the *Messianic psalms*.||| In addition to single prophetic features in other psalms these show, indirectly through the life of David or others, or directly, the great King to come. God's own son, Lord, king and priest forever, full of beauty and glory, Israel's corner-stone, yet rejected by them, despised, killed, in deepest grief, forsaken by God, and yet not suffering corruption. It is the outline of Christ, suffering, dying, risen, rejected and glorious, Son of man and of God. The very inwardness of Christ's suffering is unfolded.

* Ps. 1, 5, 7, 9-12, 14, 15, 17, 24, 25, 32, 34, 36, 37, 50, 52, 53, 58, 73, 75, 84, 91, 92, 94, 102, 121, 125, 127, 128, 133.

† Ps. 19, 119.

‡ Ps. 39, 49, 90.

§ Ps. 82, 101.

|| Ps. 46, 48, 65, 66, 68, 76, 81, 85, 98, 105, 125, 126, 135, 136, 149, 150.

¶ Ps. 33, 34, 36, 91, 100, 103, 107, 117, 121, 145, 146.

** Ps. 9, 18, 22, 30, 40, 75, 103, 113, 116, 118, 138, 144.

†† Ps. 8, 19, 24, 29, 33, 47, 50, 65, 66, 76, 77, 95-97, 99, 104, 111, 113-115, 134, 139, 147, 148, 150.

‡‡ Ps. 6, 25, 32, 38, 51, 102, 120, 143.

§§ Ps. 3, 16, 27, 31, 54, 56, 57, 61, 62, 71, 86.

||| Ps. 13, 32, 69, 77, 88.

¶¶ Ps. 28, 41, 60, 64, 70, 109, 120, 140, 141, 143.

*** Ps. 42, 43, 63, 64.

††† Ps. 7, 17, 26, 35, 44, 60, 74, 79, 80, 83, 89, 94, 102, 129, 137.

‡‡‡ Ps. 20, 67, 122, 132, 144.

§§§ Ps. 73, 105, 106.

||| Ps. 2, 16, 22, 40, 45, 68, 69, 72, 110, 118.

The *New Testament* therefore constantly refers to the Psalms. Christ uses them to explain His rejection, to teach His divinity and humanity. In them He clothes many of the words on the cross. To them Peter appeals as proof of the resurrection. From them Paul argues about the ascension.

A Treasury of Devotion.—No Old Testament book has so completely passed over into the mouth and heart of the Church. Nowhere are there prayers so rich. They embrace nature and history, the world around, the world within us, the experience of each man and of humanity. They picture all situations and feelings from the deepest humiliation, the darkest temptation, through trials and ordinary troubles, to joys of God, and highest adoration and peace. The complete penetration of moral corruption, through sin, is felt, the great power of repentance experienced, the high support of faith realized. The more the Psalter is known, the more it is felt to be constantly necessary, ever growing in power and beauty, as it fills each spiritual want for the individual and the Church. "It ought to be precious to us, because it so clearly tells of Christ's suffering and resurrection, and pictures His kingdom, the condition and being of all Christendom, that it might well be called a little Bible. But it tells us not only the works, but the words of saints. You look into the heart of all saints, as into beautiful, delightful gardens, yea as into heaven. Again, where do you find deeper, more plaintive and wretched words of sadness, than in the plaintive psalms? You look again into the heart of all saints, as into death, yea into hell. How deep and dark it is from the sad view of God's wrath." (Luther.) But faith ever prevails and conquers.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God's Spirit speaks through the experience of the saints.
2. The innocent has God with Him.
3. God's holiness demands the punishment of His enemies.
4. Sin must be confessed and repented of.
5. Praise is ever joined with prayer.
6. Christ is the power of all prayer.

PROVERBS.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

What the Proverbs Are.—Usually proverbs are sayings of practical wisdom common among the people. But here “The Proverbs” (Hebrew, *Mishle*) mean rather truths presented in terse contrasts. They are short similitudes with a lesson, often put into one sentence. Frequently, however, there is no comparison, but only a pointed, pithy moral truth expressed. “The Proverbs” are the outcome of inspired reflection and art. Their most noted originator among the Jews was Solomon. His sayings were many and covered many subjects.¹ In their form “The Proverbs” are poetic. The thought is synthetic or antithetic,* but mostly comparative (parabolic). It is expressed generally in two lines, but sometimes also in four, six, and eight. At times short proverbs are combined into a longer composition, into a proverb-poem, as it were. Chains of alphabetic proverbs also occur. But in whatever form, the proverb is simple, fresh, sparkling and charming.

What They Teach.—“The Proverbs” begin with a general introduction,² in which the words of the wise are commended for their moral teaching and their intellectual value. The main content of all their teaching is: “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*”³

Wisdom and Folly Contrasted.—The *first section*⁴ consists of a series of proverb-poems of some length. They warn the youth against the wicked, whose paths bring destruction. Wisdom calls to the fear of God. Whoever despises it must come to judgment, and eat the fruit of his folly. But the fruits of wisdom are fear and knowledge of God, and a pure walk. These are attained by fidelity to God’s commandments, and not by reliance upon one’s own wisdom and strength. The true wisdom, by which heaven and earth

* See Psalms.

were made, summons men to self-denial, avoidance of impurity, laziness, and frowardness, and enjoins truthfulness. It is a good and gracious host inviting men to its rich feast. But folly also invites men and obtains them to their destruction. It is not known who is the author of these series of connected proverbs. Wise men later than Solomon may have spoken them, perhaps with some of his words in mind. The general heading (Chapter 1. 1) applies to the whole book. Chapter 1. 6, "words of the wise and their dark sayings" is the title of the first section.

Isolated Maxims.—The *second section* ⁵ contains, as claimed ⁵ 10-22. 16. by its heading, "Proverbs of Solomon." There is no continuous teaching, but there are many isolated maxims, short, pithy and mostly antithetic. They flow along in rapid succession, with no apparent connection except here and there a catch-word, or a common heading. The order is determined rather by a single formal feature, than by likeness of thought. Certain symbols recur often, as *e. g.* "fountain," "tree of life," "well of life," "snares of death," "healing," etc. Pictorial vividness appears everywhere. There follow two additions.⁶ Both contain sayings of "wise men."

⁶ 22. 17—
24. 22, and
24. 24-34.

A *selection* of Solomon's proverbs, made by the "men of Hezekiah," ⁷ carries on the collection. Proverbs of Solomon not previously gathered, and similar to the second section, were added. They are grouped as the others in a formal way, but there is a larger and freer use of the direct parable.

⁷ 25-29.

True Wisdom.—A *wise man*, *Agur*,⁸ gives hidden sayings and ⁸ 30. proverbs about true wisdom, its proof and permanence. Under the name of Lemuel,⁹ there are reported teachings of wisdom for kings. ⁹ 31. 1-9. With an alphabetic hymn, singing the praise of the virtuous woman,¹⁰ ¹⁰ 31. 10-31. the collection closes.

The Central Thought of the proverbs is to teach wisdom, which springs from the fear of the Lord. This wisdom is a thing of the heart. No legal or ceremonial features are found in it. It may be best characterized in the words of James,¹¹ as "first pure, then ¹¹ Jas. 3. 17. peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." Most frequent are

12 11. 2;
15. 33;
14. 30;
16. 5, 18.
13 10. 12;
24. 17;
25. 21.

the warnings against impurity and against the allurements of wicked women. Then there are advised gentle inwardness and humility,¹² mercy, and good deeds of helpfulness.¹³ The whole spirit is to be one of simplicity, honesty and sobriety with careful prudence in the activities, duties and relations of life.

14 6. 1 ff.;
7. 6 ff.;
15 15. 19;
19. 15, 24;
24. 30 ff.;
26. 13 ff.
16 16. 18;
18. 12;
17 10. 10, 19;
18. 7.
18 13. 1;
15. 5;
19. 26.
19 1. 7, 8;
4. 20, 21;
6. 20;
19. 18;
22. 6, 15;
23. 13, 14.
20 16. 10 ff.;
20. 8, 26, 28.
21 28. 16;
29. 12;
31. 4.
22 24. 6.
23 2. 16 ff.;
5. 8 ff.;
7. 6 ff.;
11. 22.
24 11. 16;
12. 4.
25 5. 15 ff.
26 19. 14.
27 1. 8; 6. 20.
28 10. 1;
17. 25.
29 1. 8; 6. 20.
30 3. 3 ff.
31 3. 16;
10. 27.
32 3. 11, 12.
33 16. 1, 9.
34 19. 14.
35 11. 4.
36 8. 22-30.

Right Social Relations.—The principles of a true life are also seen in their *social relation*. Society is becoming wealthier. Extravagance, indebtedness, drunkenness, impurity are warned against. The harlot and the money-lender are accurately shown.¹⁴ Idleness,¹⁵ pride,¹⁶ uncontrolled speech,¹⁷ irreverence for the parents and aged¹⁸ are sharply rebuked. The training of the home, its counsels, warnings and chastisements are needed.¹⁹ Against license and disorder justice must be maintained. This calls for a wise and righteous ruler,²⁰ who must resist the dangers of his position.²¹ Prudent counsellors must be about him.²² But much depends also upon the place and character of woman. Her folly and sin may bring terrible evils.²³ In her uprightness she is, however, the crown and glory of man.²⁴ She makes home bright where there is a true union.²⁵ The "prudent wife" is one of God's best gifts,²⁶ building her house on the only true foundation. Her influence over the children is great.²⁷ Her persuasion leads them. Their sins are heaviness to her soul.²⁸ True and loving obedience ought they render her.²⁹ Thus the true outlines of social order and its mainstays are seen.

Wisdom Defined.—But wisdom is not mere prudence, moved by considerations of temporary well-being. It is *from above*. Jehovah is the highest. His curse is most terrible, His blessing the best.³⁰ He gives length of days,³¹ and blesses even in correcting.³² All gifts of mind, all holiness come from Him.³³ He, too, gives outward happiness of life.³⁴ The righteous before Him are delivered from death.³⁵

But wisdom is almost *personified*.³⁶ It dwells with God, as His Son. It makes the world. Therefore wisdom finds its fulfillment in Christ. He is the Son.³⁷ In Him are not only the treasures of wisdom,³⁸ but He is made for us the wisdom of God.³⁹ This wisdom He was in eternity.

37 Luke 11. 49.
38 Col. 2. 3.
39 1 Cor. 1. 29,
30.

Summary—The widest, truest moral teaching for the individual and society inculcates prudence, purity, righteousness, justice, forgiveness, mercy. It has its deep foundation in faith and in fear of God. It receives its sanctions and rewards from Him. His wisdom, which was from the beginning, shines forth in the Son. The coming of the Son brings us the highest wisdom of faith and life.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Impurity is a terribly destructive sin.
2. Justice must be tempered with mercy.
3. Good women are a high blessing.
4. Just rulers help a nation.
5. All true morality rests on faith.
6. Christ is the highest wisdom.

ECCLESIASTES.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Authorship.—This treatise on wisdom is named after its Greek title, meaning the Preacher. Its author is not known, but he is generally supposed to have been Solomon.

Contents.—The fundamental theme of the book is: *All is vanity*. But there is no despair, nor is man broken by an unchangeable fate. All earthly things are seen in their final emptiness. In sad times there is a glimpse of life to come,¹ but no assurance. Out of experience wisdom² has found that neither activity nor pleasure,³ nor searching after knowledge⁴ will give real happiness.⁵ There is no certain answer to the problems of life.⁶ Yet wisdom, as all relatively good gifts,⁷ comes from God. It is comparatively the best gift.⁸ If man learns how unchangeable is God's law,⁹ he becomes moderate in all things, and dutiful. When the end cometh,¹⁰ there has then been joy according to God's will in work.¹¹ But the conclusion, in view of judgment, is to *fear God and keep His commandments*.¹²

This position is a proof of the power of revelation. Among the most conflicting and depressing experiences of life God is not abandoned. His fear is still considered wisdom. Faith in Him wavers not. But at the same time the insufficiency of the old covenant, that must vanish,¹³ appears here most clearly. The darkness of life can only be satisfactorily enlightened by the new covenant, in which heavenly love, that is also heavenly wisdom, conquers sin, death and Satan. Only in the New Testament is the hope of man placed fully in the hereafter. What the Preacher cannot fully say and clearly see, his partial hopelessness even in faith, is the mightiest prophecy of the need of Christ.

In the series of four parts, thought is thus associated:

First Part.¹⁴—Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. What profit

¹ 12. 7.

² 1. 16;
7. 25, 28;
8. 16.

³ 2. 4-10.
⁴ 2. 12 ff.

⁵ 2. 14 ff.

⁶ 3. 21;
7. 23; 8. 17.

⁷ 2. 24; 3. 13.

⁸ 2. 26.

⁹ 3. 14; 9. 1.

¹⁰ 3. 19 ff.

¹¹ 3. 22;

5. 1 ff.;

7. 11; 8. 5;

11. 7 ff.

¹² 11. 9;

12. 1, 13.

¹³ Heb. 8. 13.

¹⁴ 1. 2.

has man of his work? ¹⁵ Men come and go. There is a continuous ¹⁵ 1. 2, 3.
 circle, and nothing is new under the sun. ¹⁶ All endeavor is vain. ¹⁶ 1. 4-11.
 The intellect that would find the secrets of life is not satisfied. ¹⁷ ¹⁷ 1. 12-18.
 Enjoyment brings no result. The wise and the foolish both die, and
 leave their goods. ¹⁸ But in all care there is some happiness from ¹⁸ 2. 1-23.
 God, who giveth the good wisdom, knowledge and joy. But to the
 sinner all that he gathers is vain. ¹⁹ ¹⁹ 2. 24-26.

Second Part. ²⁰—Everything by God's will has its time. ²¹ ²⁰ 3-5.
 Man cannot change this order, and as earthly enjoyment is God's ²¹ 3. 1-8.
 gift, it is best to rejoice and do good. ²² This goodness and joy ought ²² 3. 9-15.
 to remain, even when man sees wrong in public judgments, and knows
 that he must die bodily as a beast. Such conditions serve to show
 man his nothingness and to point to God's judgment. ²³ It is hard to ²³ 3. 16-23.
 remain joyous, because so many oppressed ones find no comforter. ²⁴ ²⁴ 4. 1-3.
 Much trouble cometh from envy. ²⁵ Many seek riches rather than ²⁵ 4. 4-6.
 the joy of fellowship. ²⁶ In political life men rise to honor, which ²⁶ 4. 7-12.
 does not last. ²⁷ Even in the worship of God evil creepeth in, and ²⁷ 4. 13-16.
 there must be purity, humility, truthfulness, that the wrath of God
 may not come. ²⁸ In injustice there is to be no despair, a higher is ²⁸ 5. 1-7.
 above the high, and the Highest is above all. Many riches bring no
 peace. ²⁹ But what God gives is to be enjoyed, remembering how ²⁹ 5. 8-11.
 easily riches are lost. ³⁰ ³⁰ 5. 12-20.

Third Part. ³¹—All riches and honor bring no joy, if God does ³¹ 6. 1-8. ¹⁵
 not grant the power to enjoy them. ³² All reaching after wealth is vain, ³² 6. 1-5.
 because it can never be satisfied, and God's order cannot be changed.
 But the wise man does not contend with God. ³³ He seeketh a good ³³ 6. 6-12.
 name, the correction of sorrow, and avoids oppression. ³⁴ The present ³⁴ 7. 1-7.
 is to be patiently borne, and good and evil days accepted. ³⁵ When ³⁵ 7. 8-14.
 divine justice is not seen, the wise man learns from the sinfulness of
 others, and mindful of his own sin, beareth ills. ³⁶ Such wisdom is ³⁶ 7. 15-22.
 rare, for great is temptation, *e. g.*, of impurity. Few are upright as
 the Lord made them. ³⁷ But wise is he that honoreth the king, and that ³⁷ 7. 23-29.
 abides time and judgment. ³⁸ At the end the righteous are blessed, the ³⁸ 8. 1-8.
 wicked perish. ³⁹ But disparity remains. Man's lot does not cor- ³⁹ 8. 9-13.
 respond with his worth. Yet let man enjoy what God gives him. ⁴⁰ ⁴⁰ 8. 14, 15.

⁴¹ 8. 16—**Fourth Part.**⁴¹—The allotment of God to man cannot be
⁴² ^{12. 8.} 8. 16—9. 3. understood, and in all things is evil done by man.⁴² But the worst
⁴³ 9. 4-10. lot is preferable to death. Let man enjoy what he has. Let him
⁴⁴ 9. 11-15. work with his might; for death will put an end to his labors.⁴³ The
⁴⁵ 9. 16— result of life's work is uncertain, yet wisdom is a high power, which,
^{10. 4.} under favorable circumstances, helps much.⁴⁴ Wisdom is more than
⁴⁶ 10. 5-11. strength. A sinner doeth much harm, but wise moderation con-
⁴⁷ 10. 12-20. quereth the mighty.⁴⁵ Folly may rise, but it will fall. Only wisdom
⁴⁸ 11. 1-6. is profitable to direct.⁴⁶ Wisdom is wise in words, but a fool's lips
⁴⁹ 11. 7-10. destroy him. A land may have a bad government, but the ruler
⁵⁰ 12. 1-7. should not even secretly be cursed.⁴⁷ Every one should do good in
⁵¹ 12. 9-11. all his work,⁴⁸ enjoy life as long as he can, especially in youth, but
⁵² 12. 12-14. should remember the judgment of God.⁴⁹ In youth shall God be
remembered, before the sad days of old age come, when the body
decays.⁵⁰

All this wisdom is gathered for the people,⁵¹ and the conclusion
is: to fear God and His judgment.⁵²

Summary.—Vanity marks all earthly things. Neither knowl-
edge, nor pleasure, nor riches, nor power satisfy; nor are they per-
manent. Wickedness and injustice often rule, and the times are
out of joint. The wise man enjoys what God gives, keeps God's
commandments and knows that judgment will come. The highest
hope is only in Christ.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. All earthly things are empty.
2. It is impossible by worldly wisdom and power to gain the truth.
3. Injustice and wickedness often rule among men.
4. The only help is divine wisdom, which is God's gift.
5. It bears what it cannot solve, enjoys God's gifts and works.
6. The darkness of life is taken away by Jesus.

SONG OF SONGS.

CHAPTER XL.

Its Authorship and Style.—This beautiful poem bears testimony of its authorship at the head.¹ It is Solomon's, though it contains some Aramaic forms. Everywhere Solomon's spirit appears, and his love of all beauty. Nature is wonderfully portrayed.² In the North are seen the heights of Lebanon, the peaks of Shenir and Hermon,³ the dens of lions and leopards, the mighty cedars and cypresses,⁴ and the flowering meadow,⁵ the gurgling streams,⁶ amid the perfume-laden breezes.⁷ East, in Gilead, its flocks⁸ are marked, and the heights of Bether.⁹ On the West, appear Carmel and its fields.¹⁰ Sharon and its valleys full of flowers,¹¹ gazelles among lilies,¹² doves by the waters, in rocks and groves.¹³ In the South, we come to the vineyard, orchard and the open field.¹⁴ The love of splendor in buildings, jewels and rich furniture is also apparent.¹⁵ All is painted in language of rich color, highly finished, deeply artistic. Truly is this the song of songs, even as poetry, for into it is gathered, as into a paradise, all that is beautiful and glorious, rich in life and joy, charming and delicate.

Its Structure.—In its form this poem appears at first dramatic. It consists of monologues and dialogues. The characters are the bride, the beloved, her brothers, and a chorus, daughters of Jerusalem. All have their characteristic language. But there is no real drama, for there is no successive action. Only incidents are dramatic in this *lyric idyl*. As such it is marked by its personal tone, its chorus, and the refrains, which refer always to the whole poem.

The Story about which this idyl is woven seems to be this: King Solomon visits his vineyard in Mount Lebanon. He comes by surprise upon a beautiful Shulammitite maiden. She flees, and he visits her, disguised as a shepherd, and wins her. Soon he comes to claim her as queen. They proceed then to the royal palace. Here the poem begins and relates *the story of love*.

¹⁶ 2. 7; 3. 5;
<sup>5. 1; 6. 3;
<sup>7. 10; 8. 4, 14.
¹⁷ 1. 2—2. 7.</sup></sup>

It is unfolded in seven parts, which always end with a refrain.¹⁶

¹⁸ 1. 2, 3, 4.

¹⁹ v. 4.

²⁰ 1. 5—2. 7.

²¹ 2. 8—3. 5.

²² 2. 8—14.

²³ 2. 15.

²⁴ 2. 16, 17.

²⁵ 3. 1—5.

²⁶ 3. 6—5. 1.

²⁷ 3. 6—11.

²⁸ 4. 1—7.

²⁹ 4. 8—11.

³⁰ 4. 12—15.

³¹ 4. 16—5. 1.

³² 5. 2—6. 3.

I. The Wedding Day.¹⁷—The bridal procession is coming.

The bride softly, half to her attendants, half to the groom, asks for the pledge of love, and praises her beloved.¹⁸ Then follows the ancient custom of lifting across the threshold,¹⁹ when the bride says: "Draw me," and the chorus answers. The bride rejoices to be in the royal chambers, but fears they are too grand for one of her lowly lot.²⁰

II. The Bride's Memories.²¹—The bride recalls how her lover visited her on a spring day.²² Her stern brothers interrupt, crying that the foxes had broken into her vineyard.²³ The spell is broken and ends in a sweet refrain.²⁴ The second memory is a happy dream, how she sought her lover in all the streets of Jerusalem and found him.²⁵

III. The Day of Betrothal.²⁶—The chorus tells how Solomon came up in his glory to claim the maiden.²⁷ Solomon praises her beauty,²⁸ and asks her to come with him.²⁹ He asks her to be his wife, using the picture of a walled garden, full of fragrance and beauty.³⁰ The maiden accepts, and the chorus rejoices.³¹

IV. A Troubled Dream³² comes to the wife. In her dream, yet a bride, she hears her lover at the latch of the door in the night. As she rises, arrays herself, and dips her hand in myrrh, that she may open and meet with fragrance her own, he is gone.³³ She follows and seeks him in vain in the streets of the city. As she seeks and cries, the watchmen take her, smite her, and rob her of her veil.³⁴ She calls upon the daughters of Jerusalem, telling of her love.³⁵ They rejoin: What is thy beloved more than others?³⁶ Then she enters upon a praise of his beauty.³⁷ When again the chorus inquires, Where is thy beloved gone?³⁸ the sad dream has passed, and the groom is with her.³⁹

V. The King Meditates on His Bride.⁴⁰—Again the king breaks forth into praise of her graces.

VI. Homeward Thoughts⁴¹ fill the bride. She would go where love was first pledged, among the flowers and the fruit-trees.

VII. Love is Renewed⁴² in the vineyard at Lebanon. The chorus tells how the beloved came up.⁴³ Solomon relates how he

⁴¹ 7. 11—8. 4.

⁴² 8. 5—14.

⁴³ 8. 5.

found his love under the apple tree. She asks to be set as a seal upon his heart.⁴⁴ Her brothers mockingly say that she is too young ⁴⁴ 8. 6, 7. to know the mystery of love.⁴⁵ But she assents and Solomon shall be ⁴⁵ 8. 8-10. the owner of her heart. The escort is heard coming to lead back the king and queen, and thus this sweet idyl, rich in Eastern imagery, ends.

A Type of Christ and the Church.—This love story has its natural value. It is to glorify human affection. It points to the simplicity, purity, and sanctity of marriage. It is a vindication of the love of one for one by a king, who became so polygamous. But this natural story portrays a higher love. The love of the king is a type of the love of God for His people. This is fulfilled in the love of Christ for the Church. The prophets tell of this love,⁴⁶ and ⁴⁶ Hos. c. 1-3; Ezek. 16. 15; c. 23. know of its completion in the Messiah,⁴⁷ whose wedding hymn ⁴⁷ Is. 62. 4 ff. Ps. 45 sings. John the Baptist,⁴⁸ and Christ⁴⁹ employ this picture. ⁴⁸ John 3. 29. ⁴⁹ Matt. 9. 15. Paul enters into its depth,⁵⁰ and the Seer beholds the marriage of ⁵⁰ 2 Cor. 11. 2; Eph 5. 25 ff. the Lamb.⁵¹ This great and high mystery is not to be found by seeing ⁵¹ Rev. 19. 7; 21. 2; 22. 17. an allegory in the Song of Songs, and fancifully interpreting every detail. Only the great central thoughts of the picture are to be applied. The lowliness of the bride, the glory of the King, the fidelity and tender love, the praise of the King's beauty, and the Bride, who shall have neither spot nor wrinkle,⁵² raised by the ⁵² Eph. 5. 27. King's love, are the spiritual elements fulfilled in Jesus.

Summary.—Pure love is the foundation of a blessed home. It must be faithful and constant. Then it mirrors the highest love of Christ to His Church. "From heaven Christ came and sought her to be His holy bride, with His own blood He bought her, and for her life He died."

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God's truth speaks purely of all human relations.
2. Affection must be sincere and constant.
3. Marriage is the covenant of one man and one wife.
4. The love of man and wife points to the eternal love of Christ for His Church.
5. This bride, won by the Saviour's blood, shall gloriously reign with Him.

ISAIAH.

CHAPTER XLI.

The Later Prophets.—With this book begins the series, called by the Hebrews *the later prophets*. It extends through Malachi: only the Lamentations of Jeremiah and Daniel are excepted. These writings are named “later” because of their place in the Old Testament. They are to be distinguished from the historical-prophetic* books, because they exhibit the prophet’s prime work, viz., as a directly called preacher of God, to make known what God tells him. The Spirit moved the prophets to record their messages. The greatest in importance, and the pre-eminent in power are Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who are called the *greater prophets*.

Isaiah.—The order of the prophets is not chronological,† but opens with the mightiest representative, Isaiah, the son of Amoz, whose name (Jehovah is salvation) is characteristic of his work. He prophesied from the death of Uzziah¹ to about the fifteenth year of Hezekiah,² from about 740–701 B.C. In style he is supreme. He views language with the eye of an artist. Wonderful wealth and brilliancy of imagination blossom into magnificent pictures. Even the homeliest scenes are made beautiful by his touch. The power of the sacred orator is combined with the music of the poet. With all these gifts there is a plainness of thought and style, a nobleness and rapidity of movement, which show high culture. From chapter 40 onward there is a marked difference of style. This part is as finished

¹ 1. 1; 6. 1.

² 36. 1.

* See Joshua.

† In order of time the prophets follow thus: Obadiah, Joel, Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

as the whole book, but the rugged force of chapters 1-39 has given way to flowing and tender gentleness.*

Four Great Events.—Isaiah's prophesies, showing the two great parts, 1-39 and 40-66, indicate a chronological thread,³ but are not strictly thus classified. Their origin was influenced by four great events. The first was the war of Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel against Judah.⁴ This aroused the secure and worldly Judeans, who, in the prosperous reign of Uzziah, had given themselves to wealth, oppression of the poor, enjoyment, and luxury.⁵ The second event was the fall of Samaria.⁶ It demonstrated the power of Assyria, under which Judah lay from about 734-705. The third event was the throwing off of the Assyrian yoke in Sennacherib's time by Hezekiah. Finally Hezekiah's friendliness to the Babylonians was the foreshadowing of Babylonian power.⁷

Six Groups of Prophecies.—These events mark six groups of Isaiah's announcements. The first,† before the Syrian-Israelitish war, contains warnings against great sins, and points to the com-

*This peculiarity, combined with a largely different vocabulary, expressing a spirit of comfort in contrast with the mighty threats of chapters 1-39, and the presupposed conditions and surroundings, which seem to fit into the exile, have moved many to assign chapters 40-66 to a great unknown prophet of the exile, who is called a second Isaiah (Deutero-Isaiah). But the difference of style and vocabulary may be accounted for by the change of subject. A master of style and language like Isaiah cannot be mechanically measured. He can, through God's Spirit, comfort as well as judge. There occur, too, many words alike in all of Isaiah. God is, in the whole book, "The Holy One of Israel." Many thoughts of judgment and comfort are found everywhere, *e. g.*, God abhors heartless worship;⁸ He regards the lowly soul;⁹ He overrules human pride and violence;¹⁰ Israel must be chastised, the land forsaken, spiritual deafness and blindness come to Israel;¹¹ a remnant will be converted;¹² God will heal and save Israel,¹³ etc.

How improbable it is, that this prophecy, so high, deep and broad, should have been written by an *unknown* prophet. The life of a later age may also be foreseen in minor matters, because the prophets spoke through the Spirit of God, who foresees all things. But if a prophet must give evidence of his surroundings, how can the exile account for the ease and familiarity with which scenes of Palestine, like the glory of Lebanon, the flocks of Sharon, the herds of the vale of Achor, the sea and the islands, the ships of Tarshish, etc., are spoken of. And could the captive Jews observe the day of Atonement,¹⁴ offer sacrifices and incense,¹⁵ oppress their countrymen?¹⁶ Did they then still strongly hold to idols,¹⁷ worship on mountain-tops,¹⁸ and sacrifice children by the rivers?¹⁹

†6, 2-5, 9, 10. These groups are indicated broadly, not with minuteness.

³ 6. 1; 7. 1:
14. 28;
20. 1; 36. 1.

⁴ ab. 734 B. C.

⁵ 3. 6 ff.;
5. 11, 12, 22;
28. 1 ff.;
32. 9.

⁶ ab. 722 B. C.

⁷ 36-39.

⁸ 1. 11, 13;

66. 3.

⁹ 6. 5 ff.;

37. 26;

66. 2.

¹⁰ 10. 5, 7;

37. 26;

47. 6;

54. 16.

¹¹ 1. 2, 5;

6. 12;

17. 9;

27. 10;

29. 18;

31. 1, 2;

32. 3, 14;

35. 5;

42. 7, 18;

49. 14;

54. 6, 7;

62. 4, 12;

63. 8, 10.

¹² 1. 27;

4. 2, 3;

10. 20, 22;

37. 31, 32;

48. 10;

59. 20;

65. 8, 9.

¹³ 1. 5, 6;

35. 4;

40. 10;

53. 4;

57. 18, 19.

¹⁴ 58.

¹⁵ 43. 23;

66. 23;

Cp. 1. 11, 13.

¹⁶ 58. 3 ff.

¹⁷ 57. 3 ff.

¹⁸ 57. 7.

¹⁹ 57. 5.

ing disaster. The second * was immediately after the war, and advised against alliance with Assyria. But Judah heard not, nor believed that God was with it. The third, † in the later days of Ahaz and the first years of Hezekiah, counsels Israel to submit to Assyria in view of the fall of Samaria, and fears the attack upon the Holy City. The fourth ‡ opposes alliance with Egypt, sees the great invasion of Sennacherib coming, and yet hopes. The fifth § tells that the invasion took place, but God delivered Jerusalem. Then in view of the rise of Babylon comes the fullest announcement of its power, but God sends comfort for the future. ¶

The Purpose of the whole book is to show Israel its sin and to announce God's judgment; to warn against alliance with world-powers, foretell their destruction, and proclaim God's deliverance of His people. The introduction ²⁰ shows the depth of Israel's corruption. ²¹ This corruption in its various forms contradicts Israel's real destiny. Therefore it must be punished, and Isaiah is appointed prophet of judgment by the Holy One. But there shall be hopeless destruction. ²² The reason why judgment must come is unfolded, and it is near. But by Emmanuel's power a remnant shall be saved and brought to a glorious kingdom of grace. ²³ The power of the world, in all its representatives, shall fall, but the penitent shall be saved. ²⁴ The full judgment of the world-powers is Israel's time of salvation. ²⁵ Israel, punished and penitent, will come from death to life. The trials and the great deliverance are a promise of final help ²⁶ Sennacherib's attack and God's deliverance are an earnest of the prophecy of judgment, which shall come in the Babylonian captivity and of grace. ²⁷ Hezekiah's sin points to this judgment from Babylon. It shall do what Assyria failed in. Israel must go to Babylon. ²⁸

Now Isaiah looks into the far future. He sees separately and yet wonderfully interwoven three great stages of deliverance: first from outward bondage by Cyrus, ²⁹ secondly from sin by the servant

* 7, 8, 11, 12.

† 13-27, exclusive of 14. 4-23 which belongs to the first group.

‡ 28-35.

§ 36-39; probably chap. 1 added as an introduction.

¶ 40-66.

of Jehovah,³⁰ finally from all evil to eternal glory by Jehovah, the Lord of glory.³¹

Its Teaching.—Isaiah has a deep and universal grasp of truth. God is exalted, the *incomparable Creator*, before whom all idols are the vain works of man's hands.³² He is absolutely above the world as the Holy One.³³ He has a mighty work and plan to carry out in the world, and He foresees the future.³⁴ His purpose is to *establish righteousness*.³⁵ Israel is sinful,³⁶ and must, though God's servant and child, be rejected, as it forsook Him.³⁷ But faith will uphold the remnant.³⁸ Through trials and by judgments will God help. As the Righteous One toward His people, He will be the *saving Redeemer*,³⁹ of deep love and tenderness.⁴⁰

The Messiah Foretold.—All truth tends toward the *Messiah*. In historical references not fully accomplished in their first fulfillment and pointing beyond themselves, or in direct outlook, the glory of Zion to come⁴¹ is seen in its King. He shall come out of the dried root of the house of David, yet a King, the son of a virgin; Immanuel, the Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, eternal Prince of Peace.⁴² In Him shall be gathered up all prophecies of Israel's service, for He is the Servant,⁴³ despised, rejected by Israel, under God's wrath, as He bears the sin of men, and brings salvation and life. Through Him will come true deliverance to Israel.⁴⁴ In part this help is still seen in pictures of outward glory.⁴⁵ But the hope is spiritual, and universal, for the Gentiles shall also come in.⁴⁶ And the end is the new heavens and the new earth.⁴⁷ No other prophet has such fulness of hope. Isaiah is truly the evangelist of the Old Testament. He is *the prophet of the Christ*.

Summary.—Isaiah speaks mightily of God's supremacy, righteousness and holiness in the government of the world. By grace God chose Israel. The powers of the world will not prevail. Because of sin Israel will be rejected for a time, but a remnant will be saved. Its salvation, which shall be to all men a light, is effected by the poor, despised, suffering Son of a virgin; but yet the true David, God, eternal, mighty, helping, removing sin and death, and bringing peace and life, which is glory evermore.

³⁰ 49-57.
³¹ 58-66.
³² 2. 20;
 31. 7;
 40. 12, 22, 23,
 26;
 41. 7, 23 ff.;
 42. 5, 17;
 44. 9 ff.;
 45. 6, 7, 12,
 16, 18, 20;
 46. 1 ff., 5, 6,
 9;
 48. 7;
 54. 16;
 65. 17 ff.
³³ 6; 40. 25;
 41. 14, 16, 20;
 43. 3, 14, 15.
 45. 11;
 47. 4, etc.
³⁴ 5. 12;
 10. 12;
 14. 24;
 20. 11;
 28. 21;
 41. 4, 9, 22;
 43. 10; 44. 8.
³⁵ 41. 10, 26;
 42. 6;
 45. 18, 19, 23.
³⁶ 1. 10;
 3. 8, 18;
 6. 5.
³⁷ 1. 2; 2. 6;
 30. 9; 41. 8;
 42. 19;
 43. 10;
 44. 1 ff.;
 45. 4; 48. 20;
 49. 15;
 63. 8, 10.
³⁸ 7. 9;
 28. 16;
 30. 15;
 43. 10;
³⁹ 41. 14;
 43. 1 ff., 11;
 44. 6. 22 ff.;
 45. 15, 21;
 49. 26.
⁴⁰ 40. 11;
 54. 8;
 66. 13.
⁴¹ 2. 1 ff.
⁴² 9. 1 ff.;
 11. 1 ff.;
 32. 1 ff.
⁴³ 42. 1 ff.;
 49. 1 ff.;
 50. 4 ff.;
 52. 13-53.
⁴⁴ 60. 21; 61. 8;
 62. 2; 65. 24.
⁴⁵ 54. 1, 11;
 60. 5, 9, 13;
 61. 6; 66. 7.
⁴⁶ 42. 4;
 49. 6;
 60. 2; 66. 19.
⁴⁷ 66. 22.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God is the only Lord.
2. He is the absolute Holy One.
3. He governs the world.
4. All that oppose Him must fall.
5. By righteousness He punishes His disobedient people; by righteousness He saves it.
6. Salvation comes in the suffering and triumphant Servant, victorious, glorious God.
7. The Gentiles shall also come to the Light.
8. By faith alone shall men stand.

JEREMIAH—LAMENTATIONS.

CHAPTER XLII.

JEREMIAH.

The Second Great Prophet, Jeremiah, whose name (the Lord casts away) indicates his work,¹ was the son of a priest, ¹ 15. 1. Hilkiah.* Born in Anathoth of Benjamin, he began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah (about 626 B. C.), and continued for forty years. He upheld Josiah in his resistance against Necho of Egypt, until the king fell in the great battle of Megiddo (609). But Jeremiah from the first saw the final danger coming from the north, foretold the exile,² and called the people to repentance.³ When in 605, at the battle of Carshemish, Nebuchadnezzar triumphed over Egypt, Jeremiah told the beginning of the seventy years' exile,⁴ from which Israel would return.⁵ Jehoiakim, then in the fourth year of his reign, repudiated this message with murderous hate. But God's answer was the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. After three years Jehoiakim rebelled and fell in battle. Soon after 594 Jehoiachin, with many nobles, was deported to Babylon. Zedekiah was then allowed to reign. The princes sought an alliance with Egypt to cast off the Babylonian yoke. All warnings of Jeremiah not to do this were rejected, and he was branded as unpatriotic, was hated and persecuted. Then came the final attack of Nebuchadnezzar, and the fall of Jerusalem (586). With those who were left in Judæa, Jeremiah was permitted to remain. After the governor Gedaliah had been murdered, the restless Jews fled to Egypt. Jeremiah, treated friendly by Babylon, was allowed to follow. In Egypt, where the last warnings were given, Jeremiah died, persecuted to the last.

² 1. 8;
4. 5, 13,
27 ff.;
5. 15 ff.;
6. 22 ff.
³ 6. 16;
7. 3 ff.
⁴ 25. 11 ff.
⁵ 25. 6 ff.;
27. 6 ff.;
29. 10.

* This is not the Hilkiah of 2 Kings 22.

The Date of His Prophecies.—In his long activity Jeremiah first collected his messages in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. This collection, which contained the substance of 1-3. 5 ; 3. 6-6. 25 ; 46. 1-49. 33, and prophecies essentially similar to chapters 7-12, 35, 21-23, was burned by the king.⁶ But Jeremiah freely reproduced it, probably adding ch. 30, 31, 50, 51. The messages of the present book were probably uttered: the first six chapters in the time of Josiah; ch. 7-12 in the time of Jehoiakim; ch. 13-20 under Jehoiachin. Ch. 21-25, against the false shepherds, belong to various periods. Ch. 26-29, against the false prophets, are from the reign of Jehoiakim and the early years of Zedekiah, while ch. 30-33, the book of restoration, contains messages from the end of Zedekiah's reign. Ch. 34-38 are again from the time of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah; ch. 39-45, after the destruction of Jerusalem; ch. 46-51, from the fourth year of Jehoiakim and of Zedekiah. Ch. 52 is an addition, perhaps made by Baruch, who was the scribe of Jeremiah.

The Style of these prophecies does not rise to the power and flow of Isaiah. There is a certain monotony and homeliness in Jeremiah, who often repeats himself,* and uses the same images† and phrases.‡ The truth is set forth in a succession of illustrations, beautiful, but not finished, and interrupted by constant comment. But in all there is a deep undertone of sorrow and of beseeching sweetness. Yielding hopelessness combines with great firmness. The style shows the prophet. He almost desponds over against the false prophets,⁷ who prosper, while in his case the word of God becomes a mark of reproach.⁸ He had to contend, strive and be cursed⁹ A high promise of power¹⁰ had led him to expect hearing ears. But he is mightily disappointed and deeply despondent, for he is persecuted in his work, and even God seems to deceive him.¹¹ And yet this sensitive,

* *e. g.*, 2. 28 in 11. 13 ; 5. 9, in 5. 29 and 9. 9 ; 6. 13 ff. in 8. 10 ff. ; 7. 14 in 26. 6, 11. 20 in 20. 12 ; 15. 2 in 43. 11 ; 16. 14, 15 in 23. 7, 8 ; 17. 25 in 22. 4, etc.

† Brasen wall,¹² turned the back,¹³ fury that burns like fire,¹⁴ the travelling women,¹⁵ rising up early,¹⁶ figs too bad to eat,¹⁷ etc.

‡ *e. g.*, Walking in the imagination of an evil heart ; ¹⁸ evil of your doings ; ¹⁹ men dying in siege by the sword, pestilence and famine, ²⁰ etc.

6 36. 20 ff

7 12. 1 ;
14. 13.
8 20. 7.
9 15. 10.
10 1. 10, 18.
11 15. 16, 17,
17. 18 ;
20. 2, 7 ff.
12 1. 18 ;
15. 20.
13 2. 27 ;
7. 24 ;
32. 33.
14 4. 4 ;
21. 12.
15 4. 31 ;
6. 24 ;
13. 21 ;
22. 23 ;
30. 6.
16 7. 13, 25 ;
11. 7 ;
25. 3, 4 ;
26. 5 ;
29. 19 ;
35. 14, 15 ;
44. 4.
17 24. 8 ;
29. 17.
18 3. 17 ;
7. 24 ;
9. 14 ;
11. 8 ;
13. 10 ;
16. 12 ;
23. 17.
19 4. 4 ;
21. 12 ;
23. 2, 22 ;
26. 3 ;
44. 22.
20 14. 12 ;
15. 2 ;
18. 21 ;
21. 7 ;
24. 10 ;
27. 13, etc.

desponding, complaining prophet is made strong in execution, and never fails to stand like a brazen wall.²¹

²¹ 1. 18;
15. 20.

The Purpose.—Jeremiah or Baruch gathered up the messages, so far apart in time, to show how *Israel shall be rejected, but again restored by God's chastisement*. After an introduction to the whole book,²² the prophet receives his call.²³ He is sanctified to announce judgment, coming as ripe fruit, seething as out of a cauldron. His work is severe, but God will protect him.

²² 1. 1-3.
²³ 1. 4-19.

The Causes of Israel's Rejection²⁴ are its unfaithfulness to the faithful God;²⁵ and its impenitence, though God calls,²⁶ sends His judgment,²⁷ disregards the boast of formal religion,²⁸ and will suspend the covenant that is broken.²⁹ God's purpose is unalterable. He is now Israel's enemy,³⁰ casts it away,³¹ accepts no intercession,³² cannot even spare His prophet great trial,³³ will take Israel from its land,³⁴ and requite according to deeds done.³⁵

²⁴ 2-17.
²⁵ 2. 1-3. 5.
²⁶ 3. 6-4. 4.
²⁷ 4. 5-6. ³⁰
²⁸ 7-10.
²⁹ 11.
³⁰ 12.
³¹ 13.
³² 14. 1-
15. 9.
³³ 15. 10-
16. 9.
³⁴ 16. 10-
17. 4.
³⁵ 17. 5-27.
³⁶ 18, 19.

The rejection is sealed.³⁶ As a potter breaks his vessels, so will God deal with Israel.

The Rejection is Carried Out.³⁷—The leaders, priests, kings, prophets,³⁸ and the whole people³⁹ are cast away. But there is hope of restoration and return of God's people.⁴⁰ Yet this comes only later. The attempt to bring to repentance now is thwarted, by present disobedience against God's law,⁴¹ against the word of prophecy,⁴² and against the counsel of the prophet.⁴³ There must follow conquest of the land,⁴⁴ and Israel's banishment.⁴⁵ But the inimical nations shall receive their judgment.⁴⁶ The prophecy of Jeremiah is being fulfilled.⁴⁷

³⁷ 20-25.
³⁸ 20-23.
³⁹ 24-29.
⁴⁰ 30-33.
⁴¹ 34, 35.
⁴² 36.
⁴³ 37, 38.
⁴⁴ 39.
⁴⁵ 40-45.
⁴⁶ 46-51.
⁴⁷ 52.

The Teachings of this Book.—Jeremiah, who lives in the law,* and reverts to other prophets,† emphasizes necessary aspects of the one truth. Sin is vividly painted as infidelity to God.⁴⁸ The human heart ought to lead to God, but it turns away,⁴⁹ for it is deeply wicked and stubborn.⁵⁰ Sin has become a hopeless habit,⁵¹

⁴⁸ 2. 5, 11;
35. 14.
⁴⁹ 2. 82; 8. 7
18. 15 ff.
⁵⁰ 4. 14;
5. 22;
7. 24.
⁵¹ 2. 18;
7. 28;
8. 4 ff.;
13. 23;
17. 9;
18. 12.

**c. g.*, 6. 19 and Deut. 32. 1; 11. 1 ff. and Deut. 27. 26; 2. 20 and Lev. 26. 13; 7. 6 and Ex. 22. 20 ff.; 20. 16 and Gen. 19. 24, 25; 32. 27 and Num. 16. 22, etc.

†*c. g.*, 8. 7 and Is. 1. 3; 10. 11 and Is. 40. 12 ff.; 2. 18; 9. 3 ff. and Mic. 7. 4 ff.

⁵² 5. 1;
⁵³ 8. 6, 10.
 11. 20;
 17. 10;
 20. 12.
⁵⁴ 24. 7;
 31. 31 ff.
⁵⁵ 9. 24;
 17. 5 ff.
⁵⁶ 3. 14, 21, 22.
⁵⁷ 23. 1 ff.;
 33. 14 ff.
⁵⁸ 30. 9, 21.
⁵⁹ 31. 31 ff.

and this condition has spread to all.⁵² Only God can help. He that searcheth the heart,⁵³ must give a new heart.⁵⁴ In Him then should man glory and trust.⁵⁵ He shall also restore His backsliding people.⁵⁶

The restoration points to the *Messiah*. He is the righteous branch, the King, Jehovah, our righteousness.⁵⁷ All salvation shall come in Him, the true David.⁵⁸ He will bring the new covenant of inward life.⁵⁹

Summary.—With wonderful tenderness and yet unmoved earnestness Israel is shown its sin. Its faithlessness and impenitence is deep. The individual heart is wicked and perverse. A mighty rejection must come, for none will hear. But after the chastisement God will bring back His people. But the true return will be when a new heart is implanted in each one. Then will come the new covenant in the son of David, the Righteous One, who is God, our righteousness.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Sin will cause rejection by God.
2. It is faithlessness and wicked perverseness.
3. Impenitence hardens the sinner.
4. All sin comes from the old, unregenerate heart.
5. God alone can give a new heart.
6. This inward change is the aim of God's restoration of Israel.
7. It comes in the new covenant of Jesus, true son of David and true God, the healing righteousness.

LAMENTATIONS.

Characteristics.—This poetical book contains songs of mourning. (Hebrew, *kinah*.) In five elegies, which are constructed alphabetically, occur measures of which each verse-member is divided into two unequal parts. The second is the shorter, and the proportion is about 3 to 2. This causes a sad, falling cadence, and together with the

constant "How long," marks ancient Hebrew dirges.* The author is Jeremiah,⁶⁰ and though there is some change of diction from the prophecies, yet on the whole there is the same monotone and homeliness of style, the same succession of pictures, and the same spirit. The virgin-daughter Zion is sitting in misery.⁶¹ Fear and terror are on every side.⁶² Deeply the prophet mourns,⁶³ for great evils are the sins of the false leaders, prophets and priests.⁶⁴ God will surely judge,⁶⁵ but let not the nations exult, for they too shall be punished.⁶⁶

Contents.—Jeremiah sings the plaintive song of Jerusalem's destruction and Judah's fall. The first elegy⁶⁷ paints the miseries of hunger, death in battle, profanation and plundering of the temple, and the woes of the exile. The second⁶⁸ tells of the same sufferings more intensely, and emphasizes the sins and the faithlessness of the prophets, for all of which God's wrath has come. The third⁶⁹ enters upon the severe inner questionings of the pious, why God has chastised His own. But there is a hope of mercy. The fourth⁷⁰ again shows that misfortune is the punishment for sin, and the fifth⁷¹ prays for restoration and grace, that the reproach may be taken away and Israel be God's people as of old.

There is deep consciousness of sin, direct accusation of wicked leaders, a strong call to repentance, combined with the problem, why God's own must drink so deeply of the cup of suffering. Still there is hope.

The wretchedness and sorrow point to the *great sufferer*⁷² to come, who bore the chastisement of sin, and solved the problem of the trials of God's trusting people.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. For the wicked suffering is punishment of sin.
2. The righteous under outward ills are burdened, but do not despair.
3. The answer is found in Jesus, who bore sins to atone for sin.
4. No misery deprives the believing soul of hope.

* 2 Sam. 1. 17 ff.; 3. 33 ff.; Amos 5. 1 ff.; Jer. 7. 29; 9. 9, 17; Ez. 19. 1 ff.; 26. 17; 37. 2.

EZEKIEL.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Author and Style.—Ezekiel, son of Buzi, was a priest of priestly descent. With Jehoiachin and many nobles he went into the Babylonian exile (after 597).¹ There he came to possess a house² at Tell-Abib,³ near the river Chebar. This house was the gathering-place for the exiles,⁴ and to them especially Ezekiel prophesied. Having been called in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's deportation, his activity continued for twenty-two years, until the twenty-seventh year of the captivity.⁵ The style of Ezekiel is polished and grandiose, but less elevated than that of earlier prophets. Yet at times he does rise to splendid poetry. Large and striking pictures are drawn, but they are very fully and minutely elaborated. Certain expressions* frequently recur. The language is late and less correct. A remarkable feature of Ezekiel is his wealth of visions, symbolical figures⁶ and actions. The latter, which are found with Zedekiah,⁷ Isaiah,⁸ and Jeremiah,⁹ may at times have been carried out.¹⁰ But the actions necessary in 4. 5 ff.; 5. 1 ff.; 12. 18 ff. seem impossible, and Ezekiel indicates that the actions were imagined and spoken in parables.¹¹ In his phantasy the prophet passed through the experiences he related.

The Order of the Prophecies.—The prophecies follow each other quite chronologically. Those in chapters 1–24 were spoken before the destruction of Jerusalem; chapters 1–7 in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, chapters 8–19 in the sixth, chapters 20–23 in

*“Son of man” (from 2. 1 almost one hundred times); “idols” (from 6. 4, thirty-nine times); “the mountains of Israel” (from 6. 2, fourteen times); “stumbling-block of iniquity” (7. 19; 14. 3, 4, etc.); “rebellious house” (from 2. 5, fifteen times); “the day is come, when iniquity shall have an end” (21. 25, etc.); “the hand of the Lord was upon me” (1. 3; 3. 22; 37. 1; 40. 1); “the Lord God” (from 2. 4, very often); “I the Lord have spoken it” (5. 13, etc.); “and (ye) shall know that I am the Lord” (6. 7, often.)

the seventh, chapter 24 in the ninth. Then followed a period of silence for Israel. In this were given some of the messages against the nations,¹² which cover, however, the whole later time. In ¹² 25-32. Jehoiachin's ninth year of captivity chapter 25 was proclaimed, in the eleventh, chapters 26-28; in the tenth, chapter 29. 1-16; in the twenty-seventh, chapters 29. 17-30. 19; in the eleventh, chapter 30. 20 ff.; in the eleventh, chapter 31; in the twelfth, chapter 32. Then follow the messages to Israel after the fall of Jerusalem.¹³ Chapters ¹³ 33-48. 33, 34 were pronounced in the twelfth year of Jehoiachin's captivity; chapters 35-39 in a year between the twelfth and twenty-fifth year; chapters 40-48 in the twenty-fifth year.

The Purpose of Ezekiel is to announce the coming judgment that calls to repentance. Yet God is still Israel's as the nations shall learn. And Israel shall return to life.

The Introduction¹⁴ unfolds Ezekiel's call. He sees in a ¹⁴ 1-3. 21. vision God's omnipresent, living providence and majesty as Judge and Redeemer. First, judgment must be proclaimed to Israel. The prophet must receive and make known God's will of judgment, as shown in the eating of the bitter roll. In this Jehovah will strengthen him, and he is set as responsible watchman over Israel.

A Call to Repentance.—The judgment of Jerusalem is a call of repentance to the exiles.¹⁵ Jerusalem and its temple shall ¹⁵ 3. 22-27. fall.¹⁶ Yet Israel will remain in unbelieving security. It expects a ¹⁶ 4. 1-11. quick passing over of present suffering.¹⁷ In this wrong hope false ¹⁷ 12. prophets confirm it.¹⁸ Consequently it does not thoroughly recognize ¹⁸ 13. its sin and guilt, while God is putting its wrong before His eyes.¹⁹ ¹⁹ 14. Divine election is boasted of, and Israel forgets its unworthiness.²⁰ ²⁰ 15, 16. It relies upon human strength and fails to see the way of divine righteousness.²¹ Therefore, judgment for sin must come to awaken ²¹ 17-19. repentance,²² and the prophet shows symbolically the destruction of ²² 20-23. Jerusalem.²³ ²³ 24.

The nations²⁴ which triumph over Israel, shall yet learn to their ²⁴ 25-32. destruction, that Israel's God is the true God of the whole world.

Israel's Restoration Promised.—Israel shall rise again from the dead.²⁵ Israel shall be restored by the mighty glory of ²⁵ 33-48.

Jehovah. Ezekiel, the responsible watchman, after silence again speaks. He speaks to the unrepentant in distant Canaan, and to the disobedient in Babylon. They shall learn that he is a prophet.²⁶ There are many false shepherds, but God will raise up the other David to peaceful shepherdhood.²⁷ Edom, the old enemy, shall be eternally cursed, but Israel shall be inwardly renewed by God's Spirit, and its land shall blossom.²⁸ Like the rising of dead bones shall it arise to one kingdom under one king. Peace shall reign under the second David.²⁹ Another attack shall come from Gog of the land of Magog in the north. But the Lord will prevail over the enemies. And Israel sold for its sin under other people, is now pardoned.³⁰

A mighty vision³¹ symbolically paints the new temple. This picture in Old Testament form is finally the prophecy of the end of all things and of the new world to come. Its beginnings are seen in the spiritual Israel of the New Testament.

His Description of God.—Most vividly does Ezekiel portray God as a personality with all the powers of personal being. In human symbols God is seen as man,³² with mighty hand and outstretched arm,³³ a face,³⁴ a mouth,³⁵ eyes and ears.³⁶ From His nostrils fury arises,³⁷ and the temple is the place of the soles of His feet.³⁸ But though so near, God is mightily exalted. All shall "know that He is the Lord."³⁹ He is the unchangeable and eternal. His righteousness will appear everywhere among men.⁴⁰ He is carrying out His plan in history. While, therefore, He regards all,⁴¹ He has special relations to Israel. In them will "He be sanctified" (*i. e.*, show His holiness) among men.⁴² For His holy name's sake will He redeem Israel,⁴³ that His name be not profaned among the heathen.⁴⁴ Israel is deeply tainted with sin from its beginning.⁴⁵ God had ever spoken to this people, but they abandoned Him.⁴⁶ Terrible was their idolatry.⁴⁷ But God will show mercy, forgive, and give life to the repentant.⁴⁸ A new spirit, His Spirit will He send.⁴⁹ Ezekiel so strongly emphasizes the Spirit, that he is *the prophet of the Spirit*. To him not only the people are a moral unity, but the individual is separately responsible. Not inheritance, but the sin and righteousness of each soul determines its place.⁵⁰

The Hope of the Messiah.—The highest hope centres about the Messiah. He shall be like the implanted lofty top of the cedar,⁵¹ ⁵¹ 17. 22 ff. and shall come to help.⁵² He will appear as the second David, true,⁵² 21. 27. eternal prince and shepherd of His people.⁵⁵ Everlasting peace shall ⁵³ 34. 23 ff.; ^{37. 24 ff.} He bring, and all blessing.

Summary.—Ezekiel powerfully shows the depth of Israel's sins, its perverse idolatry and wickedness. He presses home personal accountability. God must and will justly punish. Israel's home shall be desolate. But in mercy God will show His power, to glorify His name by redeeming His own. The enemies of His people shall fall, but Israel shall be raised from the dead, and at the end there will be restitution. The hope of Israel is the second David, their king and prince. This is Jesus, son of David, and eternal prince of peace.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The sinful habit of Israel destroyed it.
2. Every soul stands or falls by its own character.
3. God is truly a person.
4. He is exalted, and yet near to man.
5. He will remain Lord and His name be exalted.
6. He will save His own.
7. Jesus is the second David, true King and Shepherd of souls.

DANIEL.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Its Author.—The book of Daniel is not classified by the Hebrews among the prophets. Daniel had received no direct call to prophecy. He had the gift, but not the office of a prophet, and was rather a receiver of revelations. These were not publicly uttered, but bore a more private character.¹ Daniel was of a noble family, and came to Babylon after the first taking of Jerusalem, in the third year of Jehoiakim.² He was prepared for service at court, and received the Babylonian name Belteshazzar.³ Through his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream he became chief of the wise men. Under the Medes he was chief vizier,⁴ and retained his high place also under Cyrus.⁵ The Jewish exiles too held him in high regard.⁶ His existence and his writing of this book are denied by some,* but with-

¹ cp. the conclusion
12. 13.

² 1. 1, 6.

³ 1. 7.

⁴ 6. 1.

⁵ 6. 1, 28
10. 11.

⁶ Ezek. 14. 14,
20; 28. 3.

*Many scholars assign Daniel to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Some of the main reasons named are: (1) Linguistic. Greek words occur. Persian terms are found which imply greater familiarity with this tongue than Daniel could have had. The Aramaic is late West Aramaic. (2) Inaccuracies of Babylonian words and history. The word Belshazzar is wrongly derived. Nebuchadnezzar is not the accurate form, as found, *e. g.*, in Ezekiel. It ought to be Nebukadrezzar. "Chaldeans" was never used at this time for magicians. Belshazzar was no son of Nebukadrezzar. He was the son of Nabunaid, a late usurper. Darius did not take Babylon, nor did he then exist. Nabunaid was in his seventeenth year conquered by Cyrus. And Gobryas, the general of Cyrus, took possession of Babylon. These facts are well established by Babylonian records. Consequently the book of Daniel is not the report of an eyewitness. (3) The exact references to the time of Antiochus in *e. g.*, 7. 25 ff.; Chap. 11, indicate things seen, but not foreseen. Prophets foretell no such details. (4) The taking of Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim is not found elsewhere, and is inconsistent with Jeremiah 36. 9. *In reply* it is to be noted: (1) That while the full Greek influence is later than Daniel, yet such individual terms as are used may have come earlier. There may have been intercourse sufficient to account for the few forms. Some intercourse may also have existed with Persia. Daniel, who under Cyrus was in high place, must certainly have known Persian. The Aramaic found in Daniel is that found later in western Semitic regions, but there is no convincing reason why it may not have obtained previously in the East. There are not sufficient remnants of the language to allow any

out valid reason. The evidence of Daniel's authorship is found in the exact, new fact reported in 1. 1, the independent account of Belshazzar, the knowledge of Babylonian and Persian customs.* Darius and Cyrus are the latest names historically mentioned.† This book is also ascribed to Daniel by Christ,⁷ and it has exercised a large influence on the New Testament ‡ especially the Apocalypse. ⁷ Matt. 24. 15.

The Language of Daniel is Aramaic from 2. 4—ch. 7, in the direct account of experiences, and Hebrew ch. 8—12 when visions are largely reported. The style, while not grammatically pure, is lofty, and full of the grandest pictures, which are only exceeded by the Revelation of St. John. Some of the prophecies are dated *e. g.* 8. 1

final and positive assertions. (2) Belshazzar may have received the popular etymology. History of language everywhere shows derivations and popular interpretations, which are not scientific, but they do not invalidate a word. Nebuchadnezzar is also found in Jeremiah,⁸ and in other exilic books. The historical difficulties occasioned by the present knowledge of the ancient monuments, may, as in other cases, in time be solved. Perhaps the custom of double names may allow us to find in Darius, Cyaxares II. An old Armenian chronicle tells of this Darius. Belshazzar may have been another name for Evil-Merodach, son of Nebuchadnezzar. The "Chaldeans" may have, in a secondary sense, begun to mean the select, wise men, the spiritual kernel of the people, long before we have record. (3) The exact references to the time of Antiochus are possible by the Spirit, even if such detailed references occurred nowhere else. But similar features are found in Messianic prophecies. Only their denial makes it possible to say, that it is not customary to give a detailed picture of the future. The second part of Isaiah has minute references. The importance of the time of Antiochus with its persecutions justifies this account. Further, all features are spoken of in the future. If they were not future when uttered, Daniel would contain an untruth. To claim that no feature points beyond the Greek time is wrong, in view of the fourth kingdom, which is most probably the Roman. Christ also interprets 11. 31 of the Roman power. (4) The mention of a taking of Jerusalem in Jehoiakim's third year, may complement other accounts. It is not necessarily contradictory.⁹

* The receiving of new names for court service; ¹⁰ the sending of food from the royal kitchen; ¹¹ the command to make the houses of the magicians like dunghills; ¹² death by cutting into pieces; ¹³ the casting into the lion's den with the Medes. ¹⁴ The clothing of Daniel's companions ¹⁵ is confirmed by Herodotus, the presence of women in banquets by Xenophon. The account of the magicians, ¹⁶ is accurate, as is also the reference to the laws of the Medes and Persians. ¹⁷

† That in Ez. 14: 14, Daniel is put between Noah and Job does not determine his time.

‡ Matt. 24. 30; 25. 31; 26. 64; 1 Pet. 1. 10 ff.; 2 Thess. 2. 3; 1 Cor. 6. 2; Heb. 11. 33 ff.

⁸ Jer. 27. 6;
29. 3.

⁹ cp. 2 Kings
24. 1;
¹⁰ 2 Chr. 36. 6.
¹¹ 1. 7;
cp. 2 Kings
24. 17.
¹² 1. 5.
¹³ 2. 5.
¹⁴ 2. 5; 3. 29.
¹⁵ 6. 12.
¹⁶ 3. 21.
¹⁷ 2, 5, 7.
6. 8, 13.

in the third year of Belshazzar, 9. 1 in the first year of Darius, 10. 1 in the third year of Cyrus.

The Purpose of Daniel is to strengthen the faith in Jehovah, and to recount its victories in trials and persecutions. God shall have power over the kingdoms of the world, which must fall before the Son of Man, and His eternal kingdom. Daniel is the *prophet of the Kingdom*. His book consists of history,¹⁸ and visions.¹⁹

¹⁸ 1-6.
¹⁹ 7-12.

The History.—Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, Jewish youths, are brought to the Babylonian court, educated there, and by the self-denial of faith greatly advance in wisdom and power.²⁰ Nebuchadnezzar has a dream of a mighty statue, destroyed by a stone. Daniel interprets this dream of four kingdoms: the Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman. The stone, uncut by human hands, which destroys them, is the Kingdom of Heaven.²¹ Daniel's three friends for their fidelity to God pass through the fiery furnace, and their trust is rewarded.²² Another dream comes to Nebuchadnezzar, which Daniel unfolds to him. It foreshadows Nebuchadnezzar's insanity and restoration.²³ The great festival of Belshazzar takes place, and his blasphemy of God. Then judgment is announced. Darius, the Mede, gains the kingdom.²⁴ Daniel, chief vizier, is cast into the lion's den for his prayer to God. But his deliverance exalts God's name.²⁵

²⁰ 1.

²¹ 2.

²² 3.

²³ 4.

²⁴ 5.

²⁵ 6.

The Visions.—*First vision.* The four-world powers are seen in the pictures of the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the terrible beast with the ten horns. The Ancient of days conquers. One like the son of man comes with victory.²⁶ *The second vision.* A mighty ram is seen with two horns (the Medo-Persian kingdom). It is overcome by a great goat (Alexander the Great). Out of the goat grow four horns (Alexander's four generals), and a blaspheming horn (Antiochus Epiphanes). But God marks the time of desolation.²⁷ *The Third vision.* Daniel, praying and fasting, making confession of sins for Israel, and seeking God, is shown by Gabriel the limit of seventy weeks. The time of the coming of the Messiah is indicated (about 490 years).²⁸ *Fourth vision.* God's glory and majesty appear at the river Hiddekel, and Daniel humbled by this sight is comforted by

²⁶ 7.

²⁷ 8.

²⁸ 9.

the angel Michael.²⁹ Minutely the overthrow of Persian power by ²⁹ 10. Greece is told, and the sad times of Antiochus Epiphanes are painted.³⁰ Israel is rescued after some trials. The time of trials is ³⁰ 11. measured by God. The end, as life, looks far into the future to the final consummation.³¹ ³¹ 12.

Its Teachings.—The book of Daniel shows God in history. It glorifies Him as the helper of those who trust in Him. By faith Israel will be helped.³² God acts through His angels. Great among ³² 1-6, 12. these are Gabriel (strength of God) and Michael. There are ranks and principalities; and certain angels are lords of nations.³³ In the ³³ 8. 10;
9. 21;
10. 13, 20, 21;
12. 1. hope to come there is a strong and clear expression of the resurrection of all the dead, some to eternal life, some to eternal contempt.³⁴ ³⁴ 12. 2.

The *Messiah* is seen as son of man,³⁵ full of glory, whose kingdom with its eternal power shall prevail over all dominion. All the kingdoms of the world shall be crushed,³⁶ and the blaspheming ³⁶ 2. 44 ff. opposer shall be destroyed.³⁷ The time of the Messiah is known. ³⁷ 11. 30 ff. For a time He shall be cut off, but He shall rule with everlasting righteousness.³⁸ ³⁸ 9. 24, 26.

Summary.—Daniel fully shows how God is with the faithful He guides the course of events, and protects His people against the powers of the world. The kingdoms of the world shall fall, but God's eternal kingdom shall stand. It shall come in God's determined time in the one like a son of man, full of glory, power and dominion.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God rescues those who trust in Him.
2. Fidelity to God brings true temporal gain.
3. God measures the time of trials.
4. All kingdoms of the world shall pass away.
5. God's kingdom alone is eternal.
6. It shall rule over all.
7. The Son of man is the everlasting Lord.
8. There is a resurrection for just and unjust.

HOSEA.

CHAPTER XLV.

The Minor Prophets begin with Hosea. The twelve remaining books of the Old Testament, are named Minor on account of their shortness. Those from Hosea to Nahum cover the time previous to and during the Assyrian rule but are not arranged chronologically.* Then follow Habakkuk and Zephaniah of the time of Josiah, and the post-exilic prophets, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

- ¹ 1. 1. Hosea (help, saviour) was the son of Beeri.¹ He was married to
² 1. 3. Gomer, who became unfaithful to him.² † Though God foretold this,
the prophet was to learn in his life the lesson he would teach, that of
the tender seeking of the lost. His children were living testimonies
³ 1. of Israel's destiny.³ Hosea prophesied from Uzziah to Hezekiah,
about sixty-five years. He lived under Jeroboam II, and in the suc-
ceeding times of unrest and degeneracy of the northern kingdom, and
consequently until almost the destruction of Samaria. But many of
the prophecies must have been uttered before 734, for Gilead is still
mentioned ⁴ In 733, when Tiglath-Pileser came against Pekah, the
land east of the Jordan and consequently Gilead also, was taken from
the kingdom of Ephraim. Hosea lived and prophesied for the north,
for to him Israel is "the land," ⁵ its king is "our king," ⁶ and Jehu's
house is spoken against.⁷ All the localities of the north are familiar

*The approximate date of the minor prophets is: Obadiah under Jehoram of Judah (about 851-842); Joel under Joash (about 836-796); Jonah under Jeroboam II (about 781-740); Amos under Jeroboam II and Uzziah of Judah (about 781-740); Hosea under Jeroboam II and Uzziah to Hezekiah of Judah (782-717); Micah under Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah (about 758-710); Nahum in Josiah's reign (about 664-620); Habakkuk under Manasseh or Josiah's early reign (about 650-620); Zephaniah under Josiah (626-621); Haggai about 458; Zechariah from 458 on; Malachi under Artaxerxes Longimanus (about 433-424).

† Many hold that the command 3. 1 is symbolical, and that Hosea was not married to such a woman.

to Hosea; Gilead and Tabor,⁸ Gibeah,⁹ Gilgal,¹⁰ Jezreel,¹¹ Bethel,¹² Samaria,¹³ etc. The conditions of life also fit Ephraim: the neglect and selfishness of the priests,¹⁴ the heathenish revelry at the feasts¹⁵ of Baalim, the immoralities in high places,¹⁶ the bloodshed and anarchy after Jeroboam II.¹⁷ But Hosea is subsequent to Amos as appears from comparing 8. 14 with Amos 2. 5; 4. 15 with Amos 5. 5; 4. 3 with Amos 8. 8 ff. From the images which Hosea employs he appears to be a dweller of the country. He sees the activities of nature, the work in the fields, the flowers, the animals.*

The heart of Hosea is deeply moved; his feeling is very tender and sympathetic. His language in part flows gently, but in the latter part of his book is obscure and rugged. Mighty truth and deep emotion are compressed into almost enigma-like sayings.

Contents.—Hosea shows Israel's unfaithfulness to God's covenant, and announces the healing help of divine love.

The *first part*¹⁸ from Hosea's own experience tells how God is the husband of Israel. This truth is fundamental with Hosea. Hosea's wife Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, untrue to him, stands for Israel. The children symbolize that there is great guilt of blood and that God will have no mercy, and that Israel shall not be His people.¹⁹ They indicate God's judgment as living examples.²⁰ God unfolds the living parable of the house of Hosea. He will for a time reject to effect a blessed reunion.²¹ The adulteress is put aside. Israel after exile shall be pardoned, when it humbly seeks its God and Messiah.²²

The *second part*²³ contains some of the discourses of Hosea. Their central theme is guilt and punishment. In the first series²⁴ the deep moral corruption of all Israel, kings, priests and people, its calf-worship and other idolatry, its reliance upon Assyria,²⁵ and therefore the necessity of punishment are announced.²⁶ The great guilt²⁷ must bring punishment,²⁸ but after Israel returns to God great salvation will arise.²⁹

**e. g.*, Winter, early and late rain; ³⁰ morning cloud and dew; ³¹ swollen brooks; ³² the hot wind; ³³ the stubborn cattle; ³⁴ the yoke; ³⁵ sowing, reaping, threshing, etc.; ³⁶ vine and fig; ³⁷ poppy (hemlock); ³⁸ nettles; ³⁹ lion, panther, bear; ⁴⁰ wild ass; ⁴¹ birds; ⁴²

8 5. 1; 6. 8;
12. 11.
9 5. 8; 9. 9;
10. 9.
10 4. 15;
9. 15;
12. 11.
11 1. 4, 5;
2. 22.
12 4. 15; 5. 8.
10. 5; 12. 4.
13 7. 1; 8. 5;
10. 5;
13. 16.
14 4. 5 ff.;
5. 1; 8. 11.
15 2. 18; 9. 1.
16 4. 13;
6. 10.
17 7. 7;
13. 11.
18 1-3.
19 2 Kings 9
24 ff.;
10. 6 ff.
20 1, 2, 3.
21 2.
22 3.
23 4-14.
24 4-11.
25 4-8.
26 9-11.
27 12.
28 13.
29 14.
30 6. 3.
10. 12.
31 6. 4;
32 10. 7.
33 13. 15.
34 4. 16;
35 11. 4.
36 8. 7;
10. 12 ff.
37 9. 10,
10. 1.
38 10. 4.
39 9. 6.
40 5. 14; 6. 1;
13. 7, 8.
41 8. 9.
42 7. 11;
9. 11;
11. 11.

Israel's Sins.—Hosea's words are filled with tears and glow with mercy, even when he earnestly rebukes sin. Israel has become untrue to God. Of Him there is no knowledge in the land.⁴³ False lords and false lovers is Israel worshipping, following the hire which the idols give her on all corn-floors, and forgetting her true lord.⁴⁴ She only returns to God,⁴⁵ when she seeks natural blessings.⁴⁶ Otherwise there is calf-worship, and other sinful heathenish service;⁴⁷ and in this sin the priests aid.⁴⁸ They have adopted Canaanitish images and abominations.⁴⁹ Against God lies are spoken.⁵⁰ Without God kings are raised and deposed,⁵¹ who seek not the Lord.⁵² Violence and lies are multiplied everywhere.⁵³ False swearing, stealing, murder, adultery are seen constantly.⁵⁴ Upon the powers of the world⁵⁵ does this faithless and treacherous people⁵⁶ rely.

God Seeks to Save.—God seeks goodness,⁵⁷ and has no pleasure in Israel's formal worship.⁵⁸ He is as He was since He brought up Israel from Egypt, ever speaking by His prophets.⁵⁹ But He scarcely knows what to do⁶⁰ with this people filled with the spirit of unfaithfulness.⁶¹ But yet God is mercy and love. He loved Israel as a child when He brought it from Egypt.⁶² He followed it with love in its history.⁶³ He delights in the object of His love,⁶⁴ and when He chastises He still loves.⁶⁵ He will restore Israel, bless it outwardly, in nature and with everlasting peace.⁶⁶ The mercy of God is wonderfully deep and constant. His love forsakes not, but seeks the lost.

In this announcement of love's victory Hosea looks also to the *times of the Messiah*. Then shall God show His mercy in an eternal covenant,⁶⁷ when nature and grace shall come to final harmony.⁶⁸ Though this outlook is still through the medium of Israel and centres in its king David,⁶⁹ yet this second David is in fulfillment Christ, who has widened the hope of Israel, and raised the expectation of Hosea to the universality of Isaiah.⁷⁰ The love of God is given to all in Christ.

Summary.—Hosea has well shown the lesson of Israel's infidelity to God. It sought idolatry with all abominations. Self-

⁴³ 4. 1, 6.

⁴⁴ 2. 5, 18;
9. 1.

⁴⁵ 2. 7; 6. 1.

⁴⁶ 2. 5; 9. 1.

⁴⁷ 8. 6, 11;
10. 5; 13. 2.

⁴⁸ 4. 8.

⁴⁹ 4. 11;

10. 1;

11. 2;

12. 7;

13. 2, 6.

⁵⁰ 7. 13;

11. 12.

⁵¹ 8. 4.

⁵² 7. 7.

⁵³ 11. 7;

12. 1;

13. 16.

⁵⁴ 4. 2.

⁵⁵ 7. 11; 8. 9;

12. 1.

⁵⁶ 5. 7; 6. 7.

⁵⁷ 6. 6.

⁵⁸ 8. 13.

⁵⁹ 12. 9 ff., 13;

13. 4.

⁶⁰ 6. 4.

⁶¹ 4. 12, 17;

5. 3, 4.

⁶² 11. 1.

⁶³ 7. 15;

11. 3, 4.

⁶⁴ 2. 19.

⁶⁵ 2. 14; 3.

⁶⁶ 2. 15, 18 ff.;

11. 8 ff.;

14. 4.

⁶⁷ 2. 16, 19.

⁶⁸ 2. 23 ff.

cp. Rom. 8.

18 ff.;

⁶⁹ 3. 5.

⁷⁰ Is. 60. 1 ff.

ishly it wanted God only for His gifts in nature. The corruption of its worship made its life immoral. The state was insecure ; impurity, lying and murder prevailed. But God, faithful and true to His covenant, ever sought His people. His love changed not. His mercy would send the great Deliverer and Helper, Christ.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Wrong worship begets wrong life.
2. God is not to be sought, for what He gives in outward life.
3. The idols of nature make men immoral.
4. The only deliverance from sin is God's mercy.
5. God's love is unchangeable.
6. This love seeks the life and salvation of men.
7. Christ is the full revelation of God's love.

JOEL.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Who Joel Was.—Joel (to whom Jehovah is God) was the son of Pethuel (the simplicity of God). This descent distinguishes him from others of the same name.¹ Nothing further is known of him, but some think that he was a priest or of priestly family, from the references in 1. 9, 13, 14; 2. 14–17. Certainly he was of Judea. Mount Zion and Jerusalem, and the children of Judah and Jerusalem are addressed.² When Israel is mentioned (only three times),³ it never means the northern kingdom, but is used in the wide sense. The temple of Jerusalem and its services⁴ are known. The valley of Jehoshaphat is spoken of.⁵

When He Prophesied.—The time of Joel was before Amos. Amos begins his book⁶ with the threats recorded in Joel,⁷ and carries them forward, and he ends with the same promise⁸ of the hills, and of the mountains that drop wine.⁹ In Amos there is also a reminiscence of the locusts,¹⁰ so fully described by Joel.¹¹ It seems possible to fix still more closely the time of Joel, as the early years of Joash (about 836–796). There is no mention of Assyria, of Babylonia, nor yet of Syria. This latter would be referred to, if Joel had prophesied in the latter years of Joash, when Hazael attacked Jerusalem.¹² The enemies spoken of in Joel are Phœnicians, Philistines, Egyptians and Edomites. Under Jehoram, who reigned shortly before Joash,—for only Ahaziah (one year), and Athaliah (six years) intervened,—the Philistines and Arabian tribes made an inroad into Judah. They took rich booty, carried away and killed nearly the whole family of the king.¹³ The Edomites had also revolted under the same king, and only with difficulty had he prevailed.¹⁴ At this time Judah was still hostile to Egypt, while in the time of Isaiah, if not earlier, Egypt was an ally. Joel never

¹ 1 Sam. 8. 2;
1 Chr. 4. 35;
5. 4, 8, 12;
7. 3;
2 Chr. 29. 12;
Neh. 11. 9.

² 2. 1, 15, 23,
32;
3. 1, 6, 8, 16,
17, 20, 21.

³ 2. 27;
3. 2, 16.

⁴ 1. 9, 13;
2. 14, 17;
3. 18.

⁵ 3. 2, 12, 14.

⁶ Amos 1. 2.
7 3. 16.

⁸ Amos 9. 13.

⁹ Joel 3. 18.

¹⁰ Amos 4. 9.
¹¹ cp. 1. 4;
2. 25.

¹² 2 Chr. 24.

¹³ 2 Chr. 21. 16;
22. 1.

¹⁴ 2 Kings 8.
20 ff.

addresses the king, but the elders and priests.¹⁵ This too would ¹⁵ 1. 2, 13, 14. agree well with the early years of Joash, when Jehoiada, the priest, held the regency for the young king.*

The Language and Style of Joel are pure and of a high order. His prophecy is ideally beautiful poetry. In sublimity he is next to Isaiah, and in tenderness to Jeremiah.

The Purpose of Joel is to call to repentance after a great visitation, to announce the judgment of Israel's enemies, and to foretell Israel's endowment with the richest blessings of nature, the fullest gifts of the divine Spirit, and the *great final day of the Lord*. Joel is *the prophet of the last day*.

The Contents.—Two main parts are apparent, the first in which the prophet is the speaker;¹⁶ the second,¹⁷ in which Jehovah's ¹⁶ 1. 2—2. 18. voice is directly heard. ¹⁷ 2. 19—3. 21.

*First part.*¹⁸ *First section.* Upon the country long suffering from ¹⁸ 1. 2—2. 17. a severe drought, has come a great plague of locusts. They are stripping bark and branch, devouring fruit and grain. Men want and howl in distress, and the beasts in pangs of hunger are crying out for relief. This is the terrible day of the Lord. A fast and an assembly are to be called and God is to be besought.¹⁹ ¹⁹ 1.

In the *second section*²⁰ Joel compares the locusts to a mighty ²⁰ 2. 1-17. army,† covering the mountains as with chariots, climbing the walls, filling the city, strong, in exact battle array, invincible, destroying everything, darkening sun and moon, and foreshadowing the day of the darkness of God.²¹ Israel is to repent, turn to God's mercy, and ²¹ 2. 1-11. the priests are to weep and pray in the temple.²² Then will God ²² 2. 12-17. show the jealousy of His love, and will pity.²³ ²³ 2. 18.

*Second part.*²⁴ God hears and promises abatement of the judg- ²⁴ 2. 19—3. 21. ment. He will send blessings in nature, corn, wine and oil, early and latter rains, and bestow teachers of righteousness.²⁵ But greater ²⁵ 2. 19-27.

* Others attempt to place Joel in the last years of Josiah, or in post-exilic times.

† That the locusts do not symbolize a people from the north,²⁶ but that ²⁶ cp. 2. 20. the army is rather to be interpreted from Chapter 1, finds its confirmation in 2. 25.

shall be the descending of God's Spirit upon all flesh, without distinction of rank and age. Then cometh the great and terrible day of the Lord.²⁷ All the nations will be judged, but Israel shall live safely in a fertile land. Jehovah shall dwell forever among Israel with His presence and favor.²⁸

Sin and Repentance.—Joel is a short compendium of prophetic teaching. He sounds the note which others unfold. The calamities of life are a punishment for sin.²⁹ But repentance will bring God's favor. For He is merciful and of great kindness and slow to anger.³⁰ Those who call on the Lord shall be delivered, and there is "the remnant whom the Lord shall call."³¹ This truth of the called remnant runs through all prophecy.³²

The Last Day.—Joel has had a powerful influence on the conception of the Day of Judgment. His descriptions of its gloom and darkness, of the sun and moon losing their light, etc., recur throughout the Scriptures.³³ The figure of the end as a harvest, and a wine-press of God's wrath³⁴ also passed into common use. The first is found *e. g.* Hos. 6. 11, Jer. 51. 33, Mt. 13. 39, Rev. 14. 15 ff.; the second is Is. 63. 3, Lam. 1. 15, Rev. 14. 19 ff.

The Holy Spirit Promised.—The hope of the restoration of Israel, which shall be as a fountain to water the valleys,³⁵ finds its source in the promise of the Spirit.³⁶ He shall fill all flesh. Young and old, men and women, the lowly and servants, will receive Him.³⁷ This universal promise is fulfilled in the Spirit whom Jesus sent.³⁸ Thus the new dispensation is announced. When Joel joins the judgment to the coming of the Spirit,³⁹ he sees the next great act after the descent of the Spirit. In this connecting of the time of grace and the final judgment Joel has again spoken for all prophecy.⁴⁰ Likewise in looking from the present judgment to the last day there is a deep truth. When Christ came, He too joined the announcement of the near destruction of Jerusalem with the judgment at the end of the world.⁴¹ Where grace has fully come, judgment will appear.

Summary.—Joel mightily shows that in natural visitation there is a judgment of God upon the sinful. All judgments point

²⁷ 2. 28-32.

²⁸ 3.

²⁹ 1; 2. 17.

³⁰ 2. 13.

³¹ 2. 32.

³² *cp.* Is. 6. 13, etc.;

Micah 5. 3;

7. 18;

Jer. 31. 7 ff.;

Rom. 9. 7 ff.;

11. 5 ff.

³³ Is. 13. 9 ff.;

Ez. 32. 7 ff.;

Amos 8. 9;

Matt. 24. 29;

Mark 13. 24;

Luke 21. 25;

Rev. 6. 12.

³⁴ 3. 13.

³⁵ 3. 18;

cp. Ez. 47.

1 ff.;

Zec. 13. 1;

14. 8;

Rev. 22. 1.

³⁶ 2. 28, 29.

³⁷ *cp.* Num. 11.

26;

Zec. 12. 10.

³⁸ John 16. 7 ff.;

Acts 2. 16 ff.

³⁹ 2. 30 ff.

⁴⁰ *cp.* *e. g.*,

Is. 40. 1 ff.;

Mal. 4. 5 ff.

⁴¹ *cp.* Matt 24;

Mark 13.

to the end. For the repentant remnant, that seeks God, there will be grace. God will return new gifts of nature for destruction, but His greatest blessing will be His Spirit for all men.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Sin receives punishment.
2. The visitations of nature are partly punishments for the wicked.
3. All calamities remind of the great day of the Lord.
4. All creation groaneth under the curse which comes upon sinful men.
5. To those who repent God will show mercy.
6. There is ever a remnant by grace.
7. God will renew nature which He destroys.
8. The greatest gift to men is God's Spirit in Christ.
9. Those who do not accept Him cannot stand in the final judgment.

AMOS—OBADIAH.

CHAPTER XLVII.

AMOS.

- ¹ 1. 1; 7. 12. **Amos** (the bearer) was a Judæan,¹ who owned a small flock of sheep at Tekoa, near Bethlehem. He was poor and gained part of his livelihood from the lightly esteemed fruit of the sycamore-tree.² His family seems to have been insignificant, for his father's name is not mentioned as in the case of the other prophets.³ But in his poverty Amos had a strong spirit of independent power, with a deep desire for God's truth. God called him directly from his flock,⁴ and he could not but prophesy.⁵ For others may fail to hear, but the prophet not.⁶ Amos' mission was connected with God's judgment by an earthquake in the time of Uzziah,⁷ which as a great judgment left its impression into the exile.⁸ The time of Amos is marked as the period when both Uzziah and Jeroboam II reigned, shortly before Hosea, about 781-740. Suddenly Amos appeared in Bethel. After his mighty messages, Amaziah, the chief priest of the idolatrous worship, sent word to Jeroboam, accusing Amos of treason, and ordered him to quit the realm. Amos then in God's name told Amaziah of his doom, for interfering with God's truth; and returned unharmed to Judah.⁹
- ² 7. 14.
- ³ cp. Is. 1. 1; Jer. 1. 1; Ez. 1. 1; Hos. 1. 1; Joel 1. 1, etc.
- ⁴ 7. 15.
- ⁵ 3. 8.
- ⁶ 3. 3, 7.
- ⁷ 1. 1.
- ⁸ Zec. 14. 5.
- ⁹ 7. 10 ff.

- The State of Affairs.**—The conditions which Amos shows and warns against agree with this time. The Assyrian is not yet mentioned, but Syria is told that it shall go into captivity to Kir,¹⁰ and Israel beyond Damascus.¹¹ But now in the glory of Jeroboam's rule there is a feeling of self-conscious, careless power, and the mighty pride themselves on their strength.¹² They live luxuriously,¹³ are avaricious,¹⁴ and oppress the poor.¹⁵ They had made idolatrous sanctuaries at Dan,¹⁶ Gilgal,¹⁷ and Bethel.¹⁸ There have been visitations of God, but Israel had not returned to Him.¹⁹ Judah is yet
- ¹⁰ 1. 5.
- ¹¹ 5. 27.
- ¹² 6. 1, 13.
- ¹³ 5. 11; 6. 4 ff.
- ¹⁴ 8. 4.
- ¹⁵ 2. 6 ff.; 5. 11 ff.
- ¹⁶ 8. 14.
- ¹⁷ 4. 4; 5. 5.
- ¹⁸ 4. 4; 5. 5;
- ¹⁹ 7. 10.
4. 6 ff.

insignificant, the little house.²⁰ But it is also wicked and the spirit of the idolatry of the north rules at Beersheba.²¹

The Language of Amos is clear and vigorous. His sentences are well rounded. He is rich in illustrations, which, like Hosea, are drawn from country life, as is natural. In a most vivid way Amos pictures the flocks of sheep,²² the threshing-sledge,²³ the country-cart,²⁴ the harvest,²⁵ grasshoppers,²⁶ cattle,²⁷ birds in the snare,²⁸ lions,²⁹ fishing,³⁰ etc.

He uses the refrain ("yet ye have not returned to me," Chapter 4), and the dirge.³¹ Mighty are his antitheses. Deep is his knowledge of Israel's truth, but wide is his outlook.³²

The Central Theme is: *Judgment is coming*. First it approaches the six neighboring people—Damascus, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Ammon and Moab. It will come to Judah, and most surely to Israel for its hardness of heart, its immorality, luxury, and ingratitude toward God.³³

Mighty Messages Against Israel follow, beginning with "Hear."³⁴ Judgments come to Israel. It is peculiarly responsible, for God has elected it. Its visitation the prophet, whom God causes to speak, announces, and the heathen must acknowledge God's justice.³⁵ Hear ye sinful hardened women, and all the people! Formal religion is vain. Warning visitations have not been effective. Others must follow.³⁶ The wickedness that brings judgment is again shown, and the punishments announced: exile, an unknown enemy, the day of the Lord, which Israel in its blindness desires. All the sacrifices without the heart are vain.³⁷

Five Visions³⁸ show judgment: the locusts, fire, the plumb-line, the basket with ripe fruit, Jehovah at the altar. After the third vision Amaziah threatens Amos.

In conclusion,³⁹ the rebuilding of the broken tabernacle of David is announced and the coming of God's kingdom.

Teachings.—God is over all history,⁴⁰ and every advance in Israel's life came from Him.⁴¹ There is no chance in affairs. All things, calamity as well as prosperity, are from God.⁴² Therefore nature too is under God's control.⁴³ God rises strongly against sin,⁴⁴

⁴⁵ 1. 8—2. 4.

⁴⁶ 3. 2.

⁴⁷ 5. 21 ff.

⁴⁸ 5. 18.

⁴⁹ 2. 14 ff. ;

3. 12 ff. ;

4. 2, 3, 12 ;

5. 27 ; 7. 8 ;

9. 1 ff. ; 7.

⁵⁰ 5. 27 ; 6. 14.

⁵¹ 4.

⁵² 7. 3.

⁵³ 5. 24.

⁵⁴ 9. 11 ff.

hates all cruelty and injustice in the heathen,⁴⁵ much more in Israel,⁴⁶ and rejects idle, formal worship.⁴⁷ Judgment will come upon Israel in the Lord's Day.⁴⁸ The whole commonwealth will fall.⁴⁹ A great nation will be God's instrument.⁵⁰ Repentance would have averted this punishment,⁵¹ but it is now too late. Yet though God must punish, He is merciful, repents of the evil threatened,⁵² but seeks righteousness.⁵³

For Jeroboam's house there is no hope, but in the *house of David* ⁵⁴ will come restoration, and Israel will be blessed with all gifts. This hope finds its end in Christ's kingdom.

Summary.—Amos wonderfully paints God's judgment upon every form of sin. Idolatry and worldly prosperity have brought all wickedness. Israel shall be judged like the nations about it. It has not repented in time, nor listened to the warning judgments. God's election does not interfere with His justice. Israel must suffer. But in the house of David is hope. God is still merciful.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Every nation is punished for its sin.
2. The elect of God are not exempt from divine justice, if they sin.
3. Prosperity leads many to worldliness, and to sins of luxury.
4. Idolatry is the mother of much wrong.
5. God is in everything, and all comes from Him.
6. God is merciful. His help is given in the great son of David, Jesus.

OBADIAH.

When Obadiah Prophesied.—Obadiah (servant of Jehovah) is known only by name. Many in Israel bore the same name.* His prophecy shows him⁵⁵ to have been of Judah. A comparison of⁵⁵ ver. 12, 17. verses 1-9 with Jer. 49. 7 ff. proves that Jeremiah quotes from Obadiah. This was natural to Jeremiah,† and shows that Obadiah must have lived before him. Obadiah is also quoted by Joel.⁵⁶ This⁵⁶ ver. 17 and Joel 2. 32; ver. 10 and Joel 3. 19; ver. 11 and Joel 3. 3. would place Obadiah before Joel and make it the earliest prophetic book. Obadiah would then have prophesied about 851-842 in the time of king Jehoram. At this time also the second capture of Jerusalem,⁵⁷ by the Philistines and Arabians took place. These might well be called "strangers" and "foreigners." The seizure of Jerusalem as described in Obadiah⁵⁸ would not fit the first attack under king Shishak of Egypt in the time of Rehoboam,⁵⁹ for then Edom was subject to Judah. Nor could the attack by the Israelitish king Jehoash⁶⁰ be one of strangers and foreigners. And the attacks under Jehoiakim,⁶¹ and Jehoiachin,⁶² are excluded because Jeremiah quotes Obadiah.

What He Prophesied.—Obadiah forcefully prophesies against Edom. A message comes from Jehovah to the prophet and Israel, and a herald is sent to the nations to invite them to fight against Edom. God already sees Edom small and despised. Only its pride exalts it. The prophet sees it fallen. A great judgment has appeared. God has taken might and wisdom from the great men of Edom.⁶³ Edom deserves this.⁶⁴ It delighted in Judah's discomfiture. The day of judgment has come, and God will requite to Edom its sins. But Judah, nigh to destruction, shall receive new glory, and possess Edom, Philistia, Ephraim and Samaria. The house of Joseph shall go further north, and Benjamin shall have Gilead. Even the scattered Jews shall return. The kingdom shall be the Lord's.⁶⁵

Prophetic literature began with this single announcement of

*1 Kings 18. 3; 1 Chr. 3. 21; 7. 3; 8. 38; 9. 16, 44; 27. 19; 2 Chr. 17. 7; 34. 12; Ez. 8. 9; Neh. 10. 5; 12. 25.

†See lesson on Jeremiah.

judgment on one people. This one leaf contains the germ of the later prophecies against the opposing nations. It exalts God's power and righteousness, His truthfulness in His covenant with Israel, and His promise of the final victory of His kingdom, first given in temporary and passing pictures of outward glory. Though Obadiah is not quoted in the New Testament, yet his last word: "The kingdom shall be the Lord's" is fully realized in Christ.

Summary.—Obadiah tells God's enemies that their strength is vain before Him. Their wisdom shall fail. Their glorying when God's children's are afflicted will be repaid. God's kingdom will prevail.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The great of this world are small before God.
2. Neither power nor wisdom can hold men, when God will judge them.
3. God will avenge His saints, though their enemies for a time triumph.
4. The Kingdom will be Christ's.

JONAH—MICAH.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

JONAH.

Jonah, the son of Amittai, born in Gath-hepher of Zebulun, lived in the time of Jeroboam II, about 781-740. He prophesied that the king would be victorious against Syria, and restore the old border of the realm, a prophecy, which was soon fulfilled.¹ In this book a subsequent experience is related.* 12 Kings 14.
25.

The story of Jonah is like the stories that cluster about the names of Elijah and Elisha. It contains no great sermons. The story itself as given in its essential features is the prophecy.

The Purpose. of Jonah in writing what is largely a self-confession is to announce against Jewish prejudice that God's grace is over all nations.

The Contents.—In the first chapter which shows God's call and Jonah's attempt to flee, there is contrasted the unwillingness of the prophet, who would bring no saving message to Israel's

*Many deny that Jonah did and experienced what is told, or that he wrote this prophetic history. It is regarded as a romance, that was later attached to the name of Jonah. The two great miracles of Jonah, which were long ago satirized by the heathen Lucian, are the main stumbling-blocks. But there have been a series of natural similarities to the swallowing by the whale; and as recently as 1891 James Bartley, a whale hunter, was swallowed by a whale and the following day was taken alive out of his stomach. Further, a man who would thus come to the Ninevites would appeal to them, and appear as one of the incarnations of Dagan, their fish-god. This would form a connecting-point for Jonah's true message. The quick growth of the gourd, also, was possible, since God is God and speaks to men. Other arguments against this book are: that Nineveh is spoken of in the past as a great city;² that late linguistic forms occur; that the prayer³ is a collection of psalm verses. But the past tense in 3.3 is a descriptive imperfect used in Hebrew. The late forms are few and not clearly established. The psalm verses are from evidently Davidic and early psalms. Christ certainly regarded the preaching of Jonah and the miracle of the whale as a historical fact.⁴

² 3.3.

³ 2.

⁴ Matt. 12. 39;
16, 4;
Luke 11. 29 ff.

enemies, and the readiness with which the heathen sailors acknowledge God's power, though Jonah, the Jew, sets himself against it. When in distress,⁵ within the whale, Jonah prays. Severe trials would break Jewish hardness. Then⁶ Jonah goes and preaches destruction to Nineveh. Quickly the people earnestly repent. How ready the heathen are when God's call comes to them. But Jonah⁷ is displeased that God does not destroy them. By the gourd God teaches Jonah, how He loves His creatures, and cares for all, especially the helpless children and animals. The lovingkindness and mercy of God shine forth wonderfully. The book of Jonah (dove) is a dove of the peace of God for all men.

In their repentance the Ninevites contrast favorably even with ⁸ Luke 11. 29 ff. those who heard a greater than Jonah,⁸ and who did not receive the sign of Jonah; for Jonah's being in the whale three ⁹ Matt. 12. 39, 40. days is a type of Christ's resurrection.⁹

Summary.—God's mercy is over all His works. He has chosen Israel for a time, but to be the messenger of peace to all men. His love is universal and regards the weak. Lovingkindness and saving power are God's deepest aim fulfilled in Christ.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The choice of Israel does not exclude others.
2. God would have all saved.
3. How much readier are often the heathen than the children of the Kingdom.
4. God watches over the little ones.
5. The central and final purpose of Christ is to show God's grace over all.
6. By Christ's resurrection God confirms His saving mercy to all men.

MICAH.

Micah (who is like Jehovah), was a common name in Israel.* The writer of this book was Micah "the Morasthite" of Moresheth, near Gath. He prophesied from the reign of Jotham to that of Hezekiah,¹⁰ about 758-710. As he announced the fall of Samaria,¹¹ most of his messages must have been previous to 722. His largest work was done in the reign of Hezekiah, who was deeply moved by his prophecies.¹² Assyria is mentioned as the most dangerous enemy,¹³ but Babylon is also seen as the place of future captivity.¹⁴ In these features Micah reminds of Isaiah, with whom he was contemporary. Probably Isaiah unfolded¹⁵ the theme of Micah.¹⁶ Isaiah further agrees with Micah in thoughts of the future.¹⁷ Micah foretells judgment over Samaria and Jerusalem, though Hezekiah had begun a reformation. This did not prevail. Injustice and selfishness, especially among the great, ruled. There was no change from the time of Ahaz, when the piety of Jotham's time had to give way to idolatry. The people boasted that they were Jehovah's people, but believed not.

Characteristics.—Micah is far above the simplicity of Amos in style. Wonderfully graphic are his descriptions. Unexpected is the change of persons, and the discourse becomes almost a dialogue. The transitions from promise to threatening, and from threatening to promise are very rapid. There is a fondness for play on words.† The style finally, however, shows Micah, tender, affectionate, sympathetic. His warm sympathy puts him into the guise of a captive awaiting the strokes that shall fall on Israel.¹⁸ He will roll in dust on account of the woe upon Beth-aphrah.¹⁹ He pictures himself

* In this short or the longer form Micaiah it is found Judg. 17. 1; 1 Kings 22. 8; 1 Chr. 8. 34; 23. 29; 2 Chr. 18. 7; Jer. 36. 11.

† This play (paranomasia) appears especially in 1. 10 ff. and has been well paraphrased thus: "Let not Gath (Tell-town), spread abroad the dreadful news. You who live in Accho (Weep-town), restrain your tears; in Beth-le-Aphrah (House of Dust), cover yourself with dust in token of your grief and disgrace. O lady of Shaphir (Beauty-town), pass along in the captive train exposed to shame. The citizens of Saanan (March-town) will not come forth to fight, for Beth-ezel's (Neighbor-town), lamentations will fill you with despair," etc.

¹⁰ 1. 1.
¹¹ 1. 6.
¹² Jer. 26. 18.
¹³ 1. 10 ff.;
5. 4 ff.;
6. 16; 7. 12.
¹⁴ 4. 10.
¹⁵ Is. 2.
¹⁶ 4. 1-3.
¹⁷ cp. Is. 7. 14
and Mic. 5. 1;
Is. 11. 1 ff.
and Mic. 7.
12; Is. 49. 23
and Mic. 7.
17.

¹⁸ 1. 8.

¹⁹ 1. 10.

²⁰ 5. 1. shut up with his people in Jerusalem's siege,²⁰ and gladly sees the advance of the "Breaker," who would force a way for the people to return from captivity.²¹

²¹ 2. 12, 13.

Micah's Purpose is to warn, threaten and promise. His book

²² 1. 2; 3. 1; is divided into three parts, each beginning with: "Hear."²²

^{6. 1.}

²³ 1-2.

*Warning.*²³ Jehovah is coming down to judgment upon Samaria and then Judah. The names of Judah's cities are symbols of their destruction.²⁴ Woe upon the mighty who oppress. They would silence the prophet. And yet God, for whom the prophet speaks, would be gracious. But the perverse people call down judgment. Yet Jehovah will gather the remnant. The redeemer will break through the prison.²⁵

²⁴ 1.

²⁵ 2.

²⁶ 3-5.

²⁷ 3.

*Promise.*²⁶ False leaders and prophets are bringing woe.²⁷ But the true God is in Israel, who will gather His people as a flock. All heathen shall assemble at Mount Zion. But Israel must first enter into trials and woe. Yet God shall redeem Zion.²⁸ A ruler and a shepherd shall come from Bethlehem, who shall reign to the ends of the world; and God will destroy all idolatry and instruments of war.²⁹

²⁸ 4.

²⁹ 5.

³⁰ 6, 7.

³¹ 6.

³² 7. 1-6.

³³ 7. 7-20.

*Threatening.*³⁰ The people are corrupt, ungrateful to God, unjust and cruel.³¹ Present conditions are very sad;³² but God has hope of salvation for the repentant people.³³

Messianic Prophecies.—Micah, whose book seems in large part like a compendium of Isaiah, has much truth in common with him. Mighty are his expectations of the *Messiah*. Israel shall after its captivity be rescued;³⁴ Jerusalem³⁵ after its destruction shall be the mountain of Jehovah, to which the Gentiles gather.³⁶ Then shall the scattered people be brought back.³⁷ Jehovah will complete His power.³⁸ The rule of David shall be established. When the weak people are freed³⁹ there shall be "The Breaker," who will make a way,⁴⁰ the one King of one people. He shall come forth from Bethlehem, the Lord,⁴¹ and the true Shepherd,⁴² who is the Eternal.

³⁴ 4. 10.

³⁵ 3. 12.

³⁶ 4. 1 ff.

³⁷ 4. 6.

³⁸ 4. 7.

³⁹ 4. 9 ff.

⁴⁰ 2. 12 ff.

⁴¹ 5. 1 ff.

⁴² 5. 4, 5.

Summary.—God's aim is salvation. Because Israel is sinful, there must be threatening and judgment, punishment and exile, before God can fulfill His will. The return of Israel, and the

exaltation of Zion will bring joy to all in the person of the eternal Prince and Shepherd of the house of David, who shall break through every hindrance, and establish God's rule.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God ever desires to bless.
2. Men's sins compel Him to punish.
3. Wickedness will destroy even God's own people.
4. Sinful leaders and prophets corrupt a people.
5. From its punishment God will deliver repentant Israel.
6. Christ will break every bond.
7. He makes little Bethlehem great.⁴³
8. In Him will all be gathered to spiritual Zion.

⁴³ cp. Matt. 2. 6

NAHUM—HABAKKUK.

CHAPTER XLIX.

NAHUM.

Nahum (comforter) was an inhabitant of Elkosh. This village was probably near Eleutheropolis in Judæa, for Judæa is presupposed in 1. 8 ff., 15. Nahum's message was directed against Nineveh, "the bloody city."¹ It must have been given later than 664, when No (No-Ammon, Thebes) was plundered by the Assyrians,² but earlier than 620, for the Assyrian yoke still rested on Judah,³ and at this time Josiah destroyed idolatry in the domain of the former kingdom of Samaria also.⁴ The power of Assyria under Sennacherib is still vividly felt.⁵

Characteristics.—Nahum is dependent upon the law* and the psalms,† and he also shows the influence of Isaiah and Joel.‡ Nevertheless he is original and employs a grammatically pure language. Most forceful and picturesque is the poetical opening of the book. Grandeur, energy, vividness mark Nahum's style. Powerful is the description in 2. 1 ff., strong and real the picture in 3. 2, 3, very apt the figure of the lions and their whelps,⁶ and of the flight of the locusts.⁷ Exceedingly fine is the pathos in 3. 18. Nahum excels in dignity. He almost approaches Isaiah, and surpasses all minor prophets in sublimity, fire, and daring spirit.

Contents.—The burden of Nahum's prophecy is: *Nineveh shall be destroyed*. In a poem God, the jealous Lord is shown, who will put an end to the oppressors of His people.⁸ For He will send an army to conquer, plunder and destroy Nineveh.⁹ Nineveh is guilty; blood-guiltiness rests upon it, and therefore it must fall.¹⁰

* 1. 3 compare Ex. 20. 5; 34. 6; Num. 14. 17, 18.

† 1. 7 compare Ps. 37. 39.

‡ 1. 4 compare Is. 50. 2; 33. 9; 1. 15 compare Is. 52. 1, 7; 2. 11 compare Is. 22. 5; Joel 2. 6; 3. 4 compare Is. 47. 9.

Nineveh's destruction, so vividly portrayed,¹¹ is justified because ¹¹ 2. 6 ff. of her witchcraft, cruel oppression and idolatry.¹² Her cruelties ¹² 3. 4. shall be returned to her,¹³ when she is destroyed as was mighty ¹³ 3. 10. Thebes.¹⁴ Her fortifications shall fall like ripe figs.¹⁵ Her heroes ¹⁴ 3. 8. will be cowards.¹⁶ The impending doom is the judgment of God.¹⁷ ¹⁵ 3. 12. He, whose power appears in nature,¹⁸ will come as the jealous ¹⁶ 3. 13. Lord to avenge. But for those who trust in Him there is refuge.¹⁹ ¹⁷ 1. 2. ¹⁸ 1. 3, 6, 8. Judah shall be kept. Assyria's yoke shall be broken.²⁰ God's ¹⁹ 1. 7. power prevails. Judgment is the vindication of divine glory. The ²⁰ 1. 13. hope of this glory²¹ and of Israel's unity²² are prophecies looking ²¹ 1. 2 ff. toward the Messiah. ²² 2. 2.

Summary.—God, though merciful, must avenge bloodshed, cruelty, oppression by war or commerce. He is jealous for the right. Only those who hope in Him shall be saved. All worldly power must fall before God's glory. His rule and kingdom is eternal. Its greatest realization begins in Christ.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The sins of a people are its ruin.
2. Cruelty, injustice and irreligion destroy the kingdoms of the world.
3. Trust in God alone rescues.
4. God's rule in Christ is forever.

HABAKKUK.

Habakkuk (the embracer) "embraces his people and takes them into his arms, *i. e.*, comforts them and holds them aloft, as one embraces a poor weeping child or man, that they should be quiet and at peace, for as God wills, it shall be better." (Luther.) Judah was the home of Habakkuk. He was probably a Levite and participated in the musical service of the temple.²³ He prophesied ²³ 3. 19. before the battle of Carshemish (605), which is seen coming in the generation then living.²⁴ Probably he belonged to the prophets of ²⁴ 1. 5.

²⁵ 2 Kings 21.
^{10 ff.}
 2 Chr. 33. 10.

the impending judgment,²⁵ of the later reign of Manasseh and the early rule of Josiah. More exactly his time can be fixed as before Zephaniah* and Jeremiah's appearance,† *i. e.* before the thirteenth year of Josiah (626).

The Style of Habakkuk is marked, full of strange and choice expressions, peculiar to him. Independent beauty and completed harmony appear everywhere. There is a vivid movement of thought. Prophecy and lyric are beautifully blended. Full of deep feeling, the book is an artistically complete whole.

²⁶ 2. 4.
²⁷ 2.
²⁸ 1.
²⁹ 3.

The Aim of Habakkuk is to praise faith. He is the *prophet of faith*.²⁶ This he can be as God answers him,²⁷ when he calls.²⁸ Upon the answer follows the prayer of believing fear²⁹ and hoping joy.

³⁰ 1. 1-11.

³¹ 1. 12-17.

³² 2. 1-4.

³³ 2. 5-20.

³⁴ 3.

The Contents.—In spirit Habakkuk sees violence and destruction. These are inflicted by God's will through the terrible people, the Chaldeans. They become guilty for they regard their power as their God.³⁰ But because Jehovah is of old the prophet's God, his Holy One, he is assured that this judgment shall only chastise, not destroy Judah.³¹ Standing then upon the watch Habakkuk hears God's answer: That the just shall live by faith.³² A five fold woe shall be upon the Chaldean, who has sinned through blood-guiltiness, robbery, idolatry.³³ In a psalm of prayer the prophet sees the Lord arising in His majesty from Sinai to judge for the final salvation of His people. As anciently from Egypt, so shall Judah again be delivered, and rejoice in the God of salvation.³⁴

In this prophecy Habakkuk though not unmindful of Judah's sins is chiefly concerned about the cruelties of the Chaldeans. They come to punish, and need themselves the punishment of divine righteousness. The answer received is: That by trust the righteous will live. Judgment shall come to the wrongdoers, after God has punished wrong through them.

The Fundamental Thoughts of this prophecy are: 1. Two kingdoms are in contest, the kingdom of this world, whose ruler is

* Compare 2. 20 with Zeph. 1. 7.

† Compare 1. 8 with Jer. 4. 13; 5. 6.

the king of the Chaldeans, and the kingdom of God, whose ruler is God's Anointed (Christ). 2. This Christ shall prevail through God's intervention.³⁵ 3. Toward the completion of God's work in the history of the world, the faithful look, when the divinely determined time has come. 4. Faith upholds the believers while this conflict of the wicked against the kingdom of God is raging, and gives life in the midst of death.³⁶ This message is deeply evangelical. Faith as the power of life is the core of the gospel. Paul therefore rests upon Habakkuk.³⁷

Summary.—The sin of Judah will receive punishment. But as the one through whom the punishment is inflicted is sinful himself, he will also fall. God's people and rule will remain, while destruction overcomes the kingdom of the world. But God will bring forth His Anointed. Trust in this saving God brings life, and causes the righteous amid all the power of judgment to rejoice in salvation.

³⁷ Rom. 1. 17;
Gal. 3. 11;
cp. Heb. 10.
38.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. All problems must be brought before God.
2. The sin in God's own people is visited.
3. By sinners sin is chastised.
4. The tools of God's judgment fall by their idolatry and violence.
5. The God of salvation is victorious.
6. He sends and helps His Anointed.
7. By faith in the saving God and His Anointed the just lives.

ZEPHANIAH—HAGGAI.

CHAPTER L.

ZEPHANIAH.

Zephaniah and His Times.—Zephaniah (Jehovah con-

¹ cp. 2. 3.

² 1. 1.

³ 1. 1.

⁴ 2. 13.

⁵ 1. 4, 5;
Jer. 19. 13.

⁶ 1. 5.

⁷ 3. 4;

Jer. 8. 8 ff.

⁸ 3. 2;

Jer. 2. 20;

7. 28.

⁹ 1. 4, 8, 9;

3. 3, 4;

Jer. 2. 8, 26.

¹⁰ 2. 1; 3. 5;

Jer. 3. 1; 6. 15.

¹¹ 3. 1; 1. 9;

Jer. 2. 22, 34;

4. 17; 5. 27;

6. 6.

¹² 2 Chr. 34. 5 ff.

¹³ 1. 5.

¹⁴ 1. 4.

ceals),¹ contrary to the general usage of the prophets, carries his descent back to his great-grandfather, Hizkiah.² This may be the king Hezekiah. Of Zephaniah nothing is known, except that he prophesied in the days of Josiah.³ Assyria is still in power, and Nineveh has not yet fallen.⁴ The conditions in Judah also agree with the early years of Josiah, and find their parallel description in Jeremiah. Idolatry rules,⁵ and false gods are sworn by.⁶ Violence is done to the law,⁷ and all warnings have been in vain.⁸ Great is the corruption among the people, the royal family, princes, prophets and priests.⁹ The people have become shameless,¹⁰ and Jerusalem is a rebellious city, polluted with blood, and oppresses the weak.¹¹ This whole state of affairs points to a time previous to the finding of the law in Josiah's eighteenth year (621). Yet Zephaniah must have prophesied after Josiah's twelfth year, when the reformation began,¹² for the Lord is sworn by,¹³ and Baal-worship has been partly removed (remnant of Baal).¹⁴ Consequently Zephaniah's prophecy must be placed between 626-621.

The Language of Zephaniah is grammatically pure, and his style is fresh and vivid. It has its peculiarities, but is by no means as powerful or original as that of Nahum. The influence of the earlier prophets is seen.*

The Contents.—Zephaniah *comforts the pious; they shall be hid in judgment and saved.* He begins with a forceful warning. He

* Compare 1. 7 and Hab. 2. 20; 3. 14 and Is. 54. 1; 1. 13 and Amos 5. 11; 1. 14 and Joel 2. 1, 2, etc.

concludes with the hope of salvation. His prophecy has three main sections. *First, The earnest warning.*¹⁵ Judgment is mightily¹⁵ 1. announced,¹⁶ and shall descend upon Judah and Jerusalem for their¹⁶ 1. 2, 3. idolatry and wickedness.¹⁷ Great and terrible is the day of the Lord¹⁷ 1. 4-13. upon all men.¹⁸ *Secondly, The great invitation.*¹⁹ The people are¹⁸ 1. 14-18. bidden to turn to God,²⁰ for judgment will come. Philistia will fall²¹ 2. 1-3. 7. and Judah shall possess its land.²¹ Moab and Ammon receive their²¹ 2. 4-7. reward, and Judah becomes heir of their land. Jehovah will rule among all Gentiles.²² Ethiopia and Assyria shall be judged.²³ Woe²² 2. 8-11. to rebellious, sinful Jerusalem!²⁴ *Thirdly, The precious promise.*²⁵²³ 2. 12-15. After judgment God will be praised with pure lips among the²⁴ 3. 1-7. nations. His scattered people shall be brought as a meat-offering,²⁵ 3. 8-20. and under the protection of its king, Jehovah, it will be blessed.

His Message.—Deeply in earnest, Zephaniah demands that idolatry, injustice and oppression cease, and that heart and conduct be pure.²⁶ While he announces judgment, he yet sees in suffering a²⁶ 1. 12 ff.; discipline. Israel's chastised remnant will turn to God.²⁷ The²⁷ 3. 1. nations will bring pure adoration.²⁸ But most marked is the *universal*²⁸ 3. 8-10. outlook of Zephaniah. Judgment is to come upon the whole world. Jehovah will consume the earth.²⁹ The nations named in every²⁹ 1. 14 ff.; direction represent all nations. But the universality of judgment²⁹ 2. 2; 3. 8. looks to the establishment of divine right upon earth. All idols are to be destroyed that the isles of the heathen shall worship God,³⁰ 2. 11. with pure lips.³¹ From Jerusalem all wrong is removed, that God's³¹ 3. 8, 9. righteousness may rule.³² The humble, poor, and afflicted will then³² 3. 1. trust in God.³³³³ 3. 12.

The Coming Salvation.—Like Nahum, Zephaniah does not mention the Messiah, but he sees the coming of salvation for Israel and the world. In all nations shall men truly and with holiness worship God.³⁴ Together with Israel, which the other nations bring³⁴ 2. 11; 3. 8. to God out of its dispersion as an offering, will all find the strong and saving Lord.³⁵ Israel poor in spirit will live, a rescued people, in God's³⁵ 3. 10. holy mountain.³⁶ He, mighty to save, and condescending like a man,³⁶ 3. 11. will dwell among Israel, and rejoice in it with unspeakable love.³⁷³⁷ 3. 17. This highest point of hope is fulfilled in Christ and spiritual Israel.

Summary.—Sin must receive severe punishment. But God's great day of judgment will bring healing and salvation to the humble believers. There shall come joy to redeemed Israel; and all the nations shall dwell in God's truth. As eternal Love He will be among men in whom He is well pleased.³⁸

³⁸ cp. Luke 2.
14.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. All sin will be judged.
 2. Terrible is God's great day.
 3. Every nation must answer for its sin.
 4. Chastised Israel will come to God.
 5. All the nations shall worship God in holiness.
 6. God will dwell in love among men in whom He is pleased through Christ.
-

HAGGAI.

Haggai (the festive), who probably received his name on some festival, has left prophecies from the second year of Darius Hystaspes.³⁹ He is known only by his name.⁴⁰ His book is a series of prophecies from the one year—458. The first message⁴¹ is from the sixth month (September), first day; the second⁴² of the seventh month, (October), twentieth day; the last two,⁴³ of the ninth month, (December), twenty-fourth day. Haggai's language though partly poetry is for the most part prose.

Haggai's Theme is the *new temple and its glory*. The new temple ought to be built. Israel's remissness had brought the punishment of drought and other misfortunes. The leaders begin the work.⁴⁴ The new temple will far surpass the former in real glory.⁴⁵ Israel should consider the former curse and the blessing to come.⁴⁶ All the kingdoms of the world shall fall, but Zerubbabel, representing the throne of David, shall be kept as a signet.⁴⁷ Thus with an established throne ends the prophecy of the new temple.

³⁹ 1. 1.
⁴⁰ 2. 1, 10, 20;
Ezra 5. 1.
⁴¹ 1.

⁴² 2. 1-9.

⁴³ 2. 10-19;
20-23.

⁴⁴ 1.

⁴⁵ 2. 1-9.

⁴⁶ 2. 10-19.

⁴⁷ 2. 20-23.

The voice of Haggai, the first after the great prophets of the exile, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, is important. That it called mainly for the rebuilding of the temple is natural. In this task, which was delayed not merely by Israel's enemies but by its own indifference, fidelity to God was to be shown. The place of worship was very central to Israel's religion. In the temple God dwelt; there was His glory over the mercy-seat, there Israel communicated with Him. And the glory of the future was to proceed from the temple, as the place of God's greater revelation.

God would move the world, shake the nations,⁴⁸ then would ⁴⁸ 2. 6. come the greater glory of the house of the Lord of hosts,⁴⁹ in that ⁴⁹ 2. 7. He would give peace.⁵⁰ This peace points to the *eternal prince of* ⁵⁰ 2. 9. *peace.*⁵¹ In Christ's appearance this prophecy entered upon its fulfillment. ⁵¹ 2. 21 ff.;
cp. Is. 9. 6;
Mic. 5. 4, 5.

Summary.—The misfortunes of life somehow follow rejection of communion with God. Blessing attends true faith and worship. These find real glory not in outward splendor, but in the presence of God's eternal rule of peace.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Suffering comes to those who neglect God's house.
2. Religious fidelity is blessed in outward things also.
3. God's presence of peace is the true glory of His house.
4. Eternal will be the divine throne.

ZECHARIAH.

CHAPTER LI.

Zechariah (whom Jehovah remembers) is a frequent name. Zechariah the prophet was of priestly descent, son of Berechiah and grandson of Iddo,¹ who was a leader of one priestly order that returned from the exile with Zerubbabel.² Iddo's office descended to his grandson under the high priest Joiakim.³ Zechariah must have been quite young when he came from Babylon, and probably his father died early. This probability and his following his grandfather would explain why he is called a son of Iddo.⁴ Grandsons are sometimes simply called sons of their grandfathers. Zechariah began to prophesy in the second year of Darius Hystaspes (458), two months later than Haggai,⁵ with whom he co-operated in advocating the erection of the temple.⁶ How long he continued is not known. One of his prophecies dates from the fourth year of Darius,⁷ and his oracles,⁸ must have been still later.*

* Most scholars assign the chapters 9-14 to an earlier time than Zechariah. Chapters 9-11 to the time of Ahaz, chapters 12-14 after Josiah. Others place parts much later than Zechariah. The main arguments for an earlier date are: 1. Difference of form. No time is assigned to the prophecies as in chapter 1-8. 2. Difference of style. 3. The conditions indicated point to another time. Israel and Judah still exist.⁹ Egypt and Assyria are the enemies¹⁰ as in Hos. 11. 11. Judah is under kings of the house of David.¹¹ There is idolatry,¹² and prophets with heathen proclivities¹³ exist. But after the exile idolatry ceased. In *reply* it may be said; 1. That the difference in form is not marked. Only in 1. 1, 7; 7. 1 are dates given. The far outlook of chapters 9-14 explains the want of dates. 2. Difference of content accounts for difference of style. Where there is likeness a correspondence of style may be noted. 3. The conclusions drawn from certain statements as to conditions are unwarranted. Israel and Judah both occur in an undisputed part of Zechariah.¹⁴ Judah is also called Israel in Jer. 23. 6; 50. 20; Mal. 2. 11. Israel has become a general name, and affirms nothing about the existence of the northern kingdom. Egypt and Assyria are named as types of hostile nations. They have made the largest impression upon Judah's historical memory. But Javan (Greece) is mentioned,¹⁵ and this is totally incompatible with a date earlier than Zechariah. The house of David is spoken of prophetically. Idolatry was being rooted out, yet there are still remnants and alliances with heathen.¹⁶

⁹ 11. 14.
¹⁰ 10. 10, 11.
¹¹ 12. 10, 12;
13. 1.
¹² 13. 2.
¹³ 13. 2.

¹⁴ 8. 13.

¹⁵ 9. 13;
cp. Dan. 8.
21.
¹⁶ Neh. 13. 23;
Mal. 2. 11 ff.

The Language of Zechariah follows earlier models, and is comparatively pure Hebrew. He frequently repeats, and his messages are at times extended and monotonous.¹⁷ There are manifold visions and symbols.¹⁸ Simple, direct announcements also occur,¹⁹ followed by a wonderful prophetic outlook.²⁰ Zechariah has points of contact with Daniel. Upon the basis of Daniel 9; 10. 20; 11. 45, he indicates the further course of history, after the return of Judah to the very end of time.

Contents.—Zechariah tells for Israel's comfort of the *hard way of suffering that leads to future glory*. After a call to repentance,²¹ he shows, I. *The present in the light of prophecy*.²² Seven visions appear. 1. The riders among the myrtle-trees,²³ God's messenger of judgment, report the present, quiet course of events; but God will soon show mercy to His people and judge Jerusalem's enemies. 2. The four carpenters,²⁴ who shall break the four horns (the world-powers). 3. The man with the measuring line.²⁵ The Lord will again build Jerusalem, but as the multitudes shall enter, it will have no wall. The Lord is the protection of His world-wide kingdom. 4. The high-priests.²⁶ Satan accuses the high-priest Joshua, that God's wrath may come upon Israel. God purifies Joshua, protects him by angels, and with Zerubbabel makes him a pledge of "The Branch." Joshua sprinkles the blood of atonement upon the unwritten stone (*i.e.*, the new covenant). Sin will be taken from Israel. 5. The golden candlestick²⁷ symbolizes the congregation endowed with the gifts of the Spirit. Through the prophets Haggai and Zechariah the Spirit comes to the people. 6. The holy people.²⁸ The flying roll announces judgment to the transgressors. But God will cast the woman (power of temptation and sin) far away out of the holy land into Babylon, the desolate kingdom of the world. 7. The four chariots,²⁹ which pass out from God's sanctuary, between Zion and Moriah, are the angels of God conquering the inimical powers of the world. God's orders³⁰ that two crowns be set upon the head of Joshua, to picture the future priest-king. The temple and the house of David have a great future despite the present sad state.

31 7. 1—8. 23.

II. *God's command to His people.*³¹—Whoever desires the glorious future must truly serve God, bring offerings with a loving heart, as God often but in vain asked.³² When God promises mercy instead of former wrath He seeks truth, righteousness, and peace in Israel. Then fast-days shall be feast-days, in which the Gentiles will take part.³³

32 7.

33 8.

34 9-14.

35 9-11.

III. *The sad way to future glory.*³⁴—1. The good Shepherd and his sheep.³⁵ God will destroy His enemies and erect a kingdom of peace for all the world. Again the enemies shall come but the shepherd will destroy them. Yet his own herd will reject him, therefore it must suffer. 2. The holy city and Jehovah's glory.³⁶ Jerusalem will again be Israel's. It returns to its rejected shepherd after being long scattered. There is another great contest and victory. Jerusalem is the centre of the world, and all nations shall serve God.

36 12-14.

Zechariah's Wide Outlook.—To look to the very end of time, to see all things in the light of the last things characterizes Zechariah. He is only surpassed in this by the Revelation of John. But the centre about which the hope crystallizes is the *Messiah*. Israel's great sin is that against its Messiah.³⁷ As by Isaiah, so by Zechariah, the suffering Messiah is seen. Indeed so detailed is the picture of the suffering Christ, and so constantly are the words of Zechariah referred to in the gospel narrative of Jesus' sufferings, that Zechariah has been well called the *prophet of the holy week*.³⁸

37 12. 10.

38 9. 9;

11. 12;

12. 10;

13. 7.

39 3. 8.

40 6. 12, 13;

ep. 1 Pet. 2. 5.

41 6. 10 ff.

The Messiah is "The Branch"³⁹ who shall come forth, the priest to build the spiritual temple.⁴⁰ But He has also the crown of kingdom.⁴¹ Both royal and priestly office are united in Him. As a king He shall come to Jerusalem, lowly, but bringing mighty salvation and conquering the enemies.⁴² Over His own He will be a true shepherd.⁴³ But the staff of "Beauty" (mercy) must He break,⁴⁴ for His flock would reject Him. They would value Him at thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave.⁴⁵ So mean is the price that it is cast to the potter,⁴⁶ and "Bands" are severed and Israel's unity is broken.⁴⁷ When the true shepherd is cast aside an idol-shepherd arises.⁴⁸ As the true shepherd points to the Christ, the idol-shepherd prefigures the Antichrist. But finally again the spirit of grace and prayer shall

42 9. 9, 10.

43 11. 1 ff.

44 11. 10.

45 11. 12.

46 11. 13.

47 11. 14.

48 11. 15-17.

come upon Israel, when it laments its great sin of the rejection of Messiah, and beholds Him whom it has pierced.⁴⁹ Then will a fountain for healing of sin be opened in Jerusalem,⁵⁰ and Israel will find the shepherd once smitten by God.⁵¹ Many of the features of the rejection have been fulfilled in Jesus. He was cast aside by Israel, sold for thirty pieces of silver by Judas, the Judean. His price was put into the potter's field. He was pierced and under God's sword. There yet remains the time of Israel's repentance and its return, then the final hope shall be completed and all will be "Holiness to the Lord."⁵²

⁴⁹ 12. 10.
⁵⁰ 13. 1.
⁵¹ cp. Is. 53. 10.
⁵² 14. 20.

Summary.—Deeply has Israel fallen for its sin of the rejection of its Messiah. But the Lord God is working out His covenant. He has given the priest-king for sin. In Him is salvation. When Israel turns to Him then will come the last great glory for Israel and the world. And after judgment will come God's millenium.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. It is well to know the present from the view of future glory.
2. God is the Deliverer and Saviour of His people.
3. God saves by Christ, the eternal high-priest and king.
4. Israel's great sin for which it still suffers is rejection of Christ.
5. Israel will return to God.
6. Repentance is the condition of salvation.
7. Prophecy already fulfilled guarantees prophecy as yet unfilled.

MALACHI.

CHAPTER LII.

Malachi and His Times.—Of Malachi (my messenger) little is known but his name. Therefore some have denied his existence and have taken his name as a symbol. But only real prophets stand at the head of each book. Malachi was a contemporary of Nehemiah, and most probably prophesied after his second coming to Jerusalem (433–424). Like Nehemiah he opposes the alliances with heathen,¹ and enjoins upon the people to keep God's covenant,² and His ordinances in bringing their offerings.³ The demand of offerings, the mention of the altar and temple show that the place of worship must have been rebuilt.⁴ The priests are dishonoring God in polluting His service, and the people do not support the temple as is right.⁵ There are civil governors, and the Persian rule still obtains.⁶ All this fixes the date of Malachi, as much later than Haggai and Zechariah.

His Style.—In style Malachi is different from all the other prophets. There is no vision, no unfolding of one principle. The form is that of the dialogue. A truth or accusation is stated. Then follows an objection, which the people think or urge. Thereupon the truth is defended and developed. But this dialectic is living. It seems to show the prophet teaching, interrupted, and answering the people. His book contains the great leading subjects of his teaching. In this teaching we see the age of Ezra, the scribe.

Contents.—Malachi calls to *true repentance*. His call is preceded by showing I. *The sin of the people.*⁷ Israel is the people which God has chosen. God has taken Israel, but He has not loved Esau. In its history Israel may learn, when it murmurs, that not all promises are at once fulfilled.⁸ Jehovah is Israel's glorious God, but this people does not honor its God. The priests⁹ have despised God. They offer polluted offerings. Therefore God will despise

¹ 2. 11 ;
Neh. 13. 23 ff.

² 2. 8 ff. ;
Neh. 13. 15.

³ 3. 7; 8 ff. ;
Neh. 13. 10.

⁴ 1. 10 ;
3. 1, 10.

⁵ 1. 6 ff. ;
3. 7 ff.

⁶ 1. 8 ;
Hag. 1. 1 ;
Neh. 5. 14.

⁷ 1. 2—2. 17.

⁸ 1. 2-5.

⁹ 1. 6—2. 9.

them, and put His curse upon them, for they have shamefully broken the special covenant of God with Levi. The people ¹⁰ disregard God, are ¹⁰ 2. 10-17. without love to the brethren, and profane the sanctuary. Through heathen alliances, and through abandoning the wives of their youth they break God's holy law. This is an abomination before God. Though mockers say God does not care for such things, He will punish.

II. *God's call to repentance.*¹¹ The messenger, who shall prepare ¹¹ 3, 4. the way for the coming Jehovah, will come and after him the angel of the covenant. Soon shall this angel come whom Israel in its blindness so desires. But to such a people he comes as judge, who separates the good from the wicked, and judges the wicked. Let the people therefore be converted, and show a change of heart by their deeds. For the day is coming when all despisers of God shall be cut off. But to the pious, God will appear as their righteousness, like a sun, which in its rays brings salvation and life. Before the great judgment and separation, Elijah shall come, who will seek to convert the people, so that fathers and children help each other toward the new life. Then will the curse of destruction, which God will send upon the earth, be averted from the land of Israel.

A New Danger.—The whole spirit of this book shows the new danger to Israel. While there are still temptations to idolatrous practices, and the old spirit of disregard of the law ¹² is not alto- ¹² 4. 4. gether dead, yet the new danger is that Israel is becoming self-satisfied. It is expecting reward for its keeping of the law.¹³ Phar- ¹³ 3. 14. isaism is beginning. Israel forgets that not the heathen but Israel itself first deserves judgment, which must begin with the house of God, where there is sin.¹⁴ Israel must be called to true repentance. ¹⁴ cp. Amos 3. 2; 1 Pet. 4. 17

The Forerunner of Christ.—Over against Israel's increasing narrowness, Malachi, like former prophets, sounds the note of the hope of the Gentiles. From the rising of the sun to the going down thereof God's name shall be great among them, and they shall offer a pure offering of praise and prayer.¹⁵ But to Israel there must come a mes- ¹⁵ 1. 11. senger of repentance.¹⁶ He is a new Elijah, who appears before the ¹⁶ 3. 1; 4. 5. coming of the Lord. The Lord shall come in His angel of the cove-

¹⁷ from Gen.
15 on.

¹⁸ 3. 1.

¹⁹ Matt. 17.
10 ff.; 11. 10 ff.

nant. This ancient hope of Israel, this divine appearance of old ¹⁷ is to be truly realized. The earliest hope is reaffirmed. To His temple will God come.¹⁸ The temple, as with Haggai, is thought of as the centre of revelation. But judgment is close to grace. In the coming of John the Baptist,¹⁹ the second Elijah has appeared. Israel heard him not. Therefore it had to suffer judgment.

²⁰ 4.

²¹ 3. 16.

The last word of the Old Testament about the Elijah to come is followed by four hundred years of silence of divine revelation. The first figure of the new covenant is John the Baptist, linking the old to the new covenant. But the expectation "of the great and dreadful day of the Lord"²⁰ points to the very end of time, when after the pious²¹ are saved even from Israel, the last Elijah, as the messenger of final judgment shall appear. Without counting time the great ends in history are seen by God's prophets.

Summary.—The chosen people is to know that for its sins it too will be rejected. But the heathen who shall call upon God shall find life. Priests and people must turn from corruption, and prepare for God's messenger, who shall go before Him, when He appears on earth. If He is not received, judgment will come in the great separation. It is well to follow the invitation of the second Elijah and repent.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Despite being chosen Israel may lose life.
2. To despise God's covenant is terrible.
3. The friendship of the world is enmity toward God.
4. Repentance is needed to receive the coming Christ.
5. "The Lord will come" is followed by the message, "He has come."
6. The Lord who has come will come again to final judgment.

QUESTIONS.

ST. MATTHEW.

What can you say about the author and style of the first Gospel? What number plays a large part in the book? What is the purpose of Matthew's Gospel? For whom was this Gospel intended? What is the Kingdom which the Messiah brings, called in this Gospel? What beautiful phrase does St. Matthew use in speaking to us of God? What does this Gospel show? What story does St. Matthew contain? What particulars of the infancy and childhood of Jesus does St. Matthew give? What kind of a kingdom is Christ's kingdom shown to be? How only can men enter that Kingdom? Whom does Christ choose to carry on His work after Him? To what does He open the disciples' eyes? With what Jewish sect does Jesus come into conflict? How do the disciples receive Christ's predictions of sufferings? What do the disciples need in order to appreciate His Kingdom better? How must their life be molded? How is the triumph of the King in time and eternity shown by Matthew? What fate should befall Jerusalem and why? What do the closing chapters 26-28 contain? Mention some practical lessons taught by this Gospel.

ST. MARK.

What is to be said of the similarity between St. Mark and St. Matthew? Which writers of the Gospel are called synoptists, and why? In what way was the record of the Gospel at first preserved? Of what apostle is St. Mark an interpreter? What can you say about the style in which St. Mark's Gospel is written? What personal touches show that he is Peter's interpreter? What is the aim of St. Mark's Gospel? What does it seek to show? For whom was his Gospel intended? With an account of what man does St. Mark open? What was John the Baptist's message? How does St. Mark introduce his account of the Lord? What do the Lord's enemies charge Him with? How does the Lord answer them? What effect is produced on His enemies? How does the Lord provide for the future proclamation of His Kingdom? How are the disciples brought to believe in Him? With what does the second part of St. Mark's Gospel begin? What are the dis-

ciples to be made to see by means of Christ's miracles? To what spiritual state are the disciples gradually brought? What do the disciples not yet understand? What grace should rule in them in view of their sufferings? How does this new life of love manifest itself? Why does Jesus enter upon the way of suffering? After His death how does Jesus reappear? What central idea runs through this Gospel? What are its practical lessons?

ST. LUKE.

What can you say about the style of Luke's Gospel? What is to be said concerning the relation of Luke to Paul? Mention some of the Gospel narratives which are found in Luke alone. For whom was Luke's Gospel written? In what light does it exhibit Christ? How does it view Him in His relation to sinners? What makes the Gospel the great missionary power? Give a summary of the contents of Luke. What kind of feeling prevades this third Gospel? Name some of the early Christian hymns voicing this joy. What does this Gospel have to say on the subject of prayer? How does this Gospel exhibit Christ's mercy and graciousness? What incidents in the life of John the Baptist and of Jesus are given by Luke alone? What is the picture of woman given to us by Luke? To what class or kind of people does Luke especially direct his attention? Mention some examples of this Gospel's attention to the lowly. How is the toleration of love taught? Give a brief account of the story of Christ in historical order. How does Luke bring out the human side of Christ? Beneath this human exterior what is revealed? What was Christ's purpose in coming? Who are the greatest objects of the Saviour's care? For whom is His grace intended? What practical lessons do we learn from Luke's Gospel?

ST. JOHN.

How does Luther characterize the Gospel of John? Mention some of the facts brought out in the Gospel which exhibit the intimate relation between John and Jesus. What vivid account of events mark John as an eye-witness? What is to be said of the language of John? Mention some of John's favorite words. Why is a proper understanding of these words important? Name some characters which John has clearly drawn. Show the essential agreement between John and the Synoptists. To whom are Christ's discourses in John chiefly addressed? What is the center in the Synoptists and what in John? What is the nature of his illustrations? Mention some of these

types. What is the supreme problem in John's Gospel? What does John aim to exhibit in the personality of Christ? What is the central fact in his view of Christ? How does he regard everything that occurs? What is the keynote and purpose of John's Gospel? What effect does Christ's presence produce upon men? What separation does He effect? What name is given to Christ in the introduction to John's Gospel? What is the meaning of the name "The Word" as applied to Christ? How does this "Word" reveal Himself to the world? What effect does revelation not produce on the mixed multitude? How does Christ reveal Himself to His Disciples? Give a brief summary of the character and contents of John's Gospel. What practical lessons may we learn?

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

By whom and when was Acts written? What is to be said of its style and general character? How are apparent contradictions between Acts and the Epistles to be explained? What was Luke's purpose in writing Acts? To whom did Paul first address the Gospel? Why did he turn to the Gentiles? How does Luke portray Christ in the Acts? In what incidents is Christ vividly brought out as the Lord in His people? How does He exhibit the activity of the Holy Spirit? What important fact marks the divisions of the early history of the Church? What is recorded in the first section of Acts? What is recorded in the second section? What is recorded in the third section? What is recorded in the fourth section? When Acts ends how far had the Gospel extended? By whom is the development of the Church guided? How does Christ work in His Church? Who rejected and who gained the Kingdom? What was established in the world? By what means did the Word of God increase? What practical lessons do we learn from Acts?

ROMANS.

Why were the New Testament epistles written? What is to be said of their universal application? Which apostolic letters have been preserved to us? Who is the most noted letter writer of the New Testament? What is to be said of his diction? Why are Paul's letters at times hard to understand? What revelation of his inner self do Paul's letters give us? Romans is the foremost of what group of letters? Where and when was it written? Why did Paul for a long time refrain from going to Rome? What great truth does Paul unfold in Romans?

What is the theme of the Epistle? Why is salvation necessary? How only can men be justified? Who receive righteousness and remission of sins? How were men justified under the Old Testament covenant? What results follow upon justification? For whom has justification been made possible? What effect has the grace of God on our life? Why dare not Christians live in sin? What hinders us from doing God's will perfectly even when we desire to do so? Why does not the law condemn the believer? How should the believer live and act? Why did Israel lose its privileges? When will there be a general conversion of the Jews? What practical exhortations are given? Give a summary of this epistle to the Romans. What lessons may we learn from this epistle?

I CORINTHIANS.

Describe Corinth and its inhabitants. What effect did the moral atmosphere of the city have upon the church there? Give an account of the founding of the church at Corinth. What occasioned the writing of this letter? What determined its character? What does it seek to correct? What is the true power in human relations? How does the Gospel appear to the world? What would the Gospel do with the world's wisdom? What is the Crucified One in reality? How is He brought to men? Upon whom is the Church founded? What does the Holy Spirit make of those who receive His grace? What evils in the Church does Paul reprove? What does he say about a party-spirit in the Church? How should the Church act toward those who scandalize it? What does Paul say about the Christian's contention in the courts? What does he say about the sin of uncleanness? What does he say about marriage? What does he say about eating meats offered to idols? What does he say about woman in the public worship? What is the object of the Lord's Table? What does Paul say about the resurrection of the body? What does the closing chapter contain? Give a summary of the contents of this book. What practical lessons are taught by this epistle?

II CORINTHIANS.

Why was a second letter to the Corinthians necessary? How much had the first letter accomplished? What evils still remained in the church? Against what false teachers did Paul defend himself? What does he say about the triumph of the cross? What does he say about the Christian's victory in suffering? Into what three parts does this letter naturally divide? What does Paul say about his apostleship?

What should arouse the Corinthians' and our liberality? How does Paul defend his apostolic authority? In what light does this letter exhibit St. Paul? Why do Christians carry the cross? What shall the result, however, finally be? What kind of a ministry is that of the New Testament? What should Christ's self-denial and poverty move us to do? What practical lessons do we learn from this epistle?

GALATIANS.

To whom was this letter addressed? What is the character of this letter? What are Paul's feelings toward the churches of Galatia? What had happened to the churches there? What great central and fundamental doctrine of Christianity does Paul defend in this epistle? Whom does Paul oppose? How alone is man to be saved? Is the Christian free from the law or still in bondage to it? What is the believer's relation to God? How does the believer fulfill the law? What is established by this epistle? In what great religious movement did the epistle to the Galatians play an important part? Into how many parts is this epistle divided? What does the first part defend? What does the second part unfold? Which covenant of the Old Testament was first, that of promise (the Gospel) or that of law? What is the object of the law? What does the third part contain? How should the believers work? Who is the only way of peace and salvation? How only are we justified? How does faith work? What practical lessons do we learn from this epistle?

EPHESIANS.

What series of Paul's letters begins with Ephesians? What is to be said on the question as to whether this letter was addressed to the Ephesians? Describe the relations between St. Paul and the Ephesians. What success had the Gospel in Ephesus? At what time and from what place was this letter probably written? What is the central truth of this epistle? What is the special purpose of this epistle? What is the relation between Christ and His Church? What does it show was God's eternal purpose? Into what two parts is the epistle divided? Give a summary of the first part. Give a summary of the second part. For what does the apostle give thanks in the first part? What are these blessings? Through whom are these blessings communicated? By whom are they sealed to us? How is God's power manifest in Christ? How is it manifest in individuals? How is it manifest in all mankind? What is the whole Church exhorted to keep?

To what different classes of persons does the apostle give directions? Give a summary of this epistle. What practical lessons may we learn from this epistle?

PHILIPPIANS.

When did St. Paul first come to Philippi? Describe his experience there? Describe his subsequent relations with the Philippians. What is to be said of the character of this epistle? What is to be said about the style in which it is written? What does "Philippians" reflect? How does this letter show the tenderness of St. Paul's feelings for the Philippians? What do the Philippians yet need? What doctrines does Paul exhibit in this epistle? How is righteousness apprehended? What follows upon faith? For what does St. Paul offer up a prayer of thanksgiving? To what does he exhort the Philippians? Who is our great example of self-denying humility? Against what two errors does Paul warn the Philippians? Does grace mean that Christians dare continue in sin? What must the Christian's life be? In closing his epistle to what does Paul exhort the Philippians? Give a summary of this epistle. What practical lessons are taught by this epistle?

COLOSSIANS.

Tell what you know about Colossæ. Who founded the churches in Colossæ and its vicinity? Why does Paul write to them? When was this letter written? Describe the character of this epistle. What is the object of this epistle? What were some wicked men trying to substitute for Christ? What human commandments did these false teachers emphasize? What damage were these errorists doing? In order to oppose these errorists, what does St. Paul put as the centre of this epistle? What does he exalt? In whom does the "mystery of God" become manifest? How did Christ triumph over the power of evil and free us from the corruption of sin? How is the new life in Christ given? For what does St. Paul offer thanksgiving to God at the beginning of this epistle? What does he pray for them? What place does Christ hold in the plan of God? How would the Colossians be led to full holiness? How was Paul carrying out God's plan? What admonitions does he give the Colossians? What life are they to read? Give a summary of this epistle. What practical lessons are taught by this epistle?

I AND II THESSALONIANS.

What can you tell about Thessalonica? How was the church established there? What persecution did it suffer? What is said about the

faith of the Thessalonians? What was the chief purpose of this epistle? What mistaken expectation did the Thessalonians cherish? What were they troubled about? How did St. Paul comfort them? How is Jesus exhibited in this letter? What two parts may be distinguished in this epistle? What filled Paul's heart with joy? From what shall the Thessalonians keep themselves free? What does Paul say about Christ's second coming? What virtues shall be exercised in all the relations of life? Give a summary of I Thessalonians. What practical lessons are taught by it? What is to be said about the character of II Thessalonians? What is its purpose? When will Christ come? What is said about Antichrist? What two parts does this letter contain? What is the object of the coming judgment? How shall Christians conduct themselves in view of it? Give a summary of this epistle. Give its practical lessons.

I AND II TIMOTHY.

Which are the pastoral epistles and what do they contain? Mention some favorite expressions used in these epistles. Why is God called our Saviour? What great doctrine is again found in these epistles? What errors are met? Whose duties are enumerated? When and under what circumstances was I Timothy written? What position and office did Timothy occupy? What is Timothy exhorted to hold fast? What does the apostle say about order in worship? What does he say about church officers? Against whom is Timothy warned and what is he exhorted to be? How is he to conduct himself? About what time and under what circumstances was II Timothy written? What work is Timothy exhorted to do? What virtues are to mark Timothy? What is to be his attitude toward word-strifes? How shall he withstand and oppose false teachers and false teaching? Give a summary of II Timothy. What practical lessons are taught in these epistles?

TITUS—PHILEMON.

To whom was the third pastoral letter addressed? Tell what you know about Titus. In what island was Titus stationed? What was the object of this letter? What conditions in the Church in Crete had to be met? Of what is Titus to show himself a pattern? What doctrine does Paul summarize in this letter against error? What does he say about the qualifications of elders? What duties does he unfold in this epistle? What does God's saving grace teach us to do? Give a sum-

mary of this epistle. Give its practical lessons. Tell what you know about Philemon. Tell what you know about Onesimus. What is the character of this letter? What is the object of this letter? What request does it make? What makes this letter of great value to us? What bearing has it on the social question? What effect does the Gospel produce upon the social relations of the higher and lower classes? How are the social relations improved by Christianity? Give a summary of the epistle to Philemon. What practical lessons does this epistle teach?

HEBREWS.

What is to be said of Hebrews as an epistle? What is to be said of its style? What is to be said about its authorship? To whom was it addressed? What was the occasion for its writing? What was its object? What is the theme of Hebrews? Through whom alone have we the better and eternal hope? What has Christ done for us to secure this hope for us? What great truth concerning the person of Jesus is laid down? What made the salvation brought about by His death so great a salvation? Who only obtains eternal rest? What is to be said of Christ as the one great High-priest? What effect has His great sacrifice for us produced? Why are the prophetic sacrifices of propitiation at an end? What is to be the believer's attitude toward Christ? What shall happen to those who deny Christ? What history should give the believers new inspiration under their trials? How should they run their Christian race? Give a summary of this epistle. What are its practical lessons?

ST. JAMES.

Which are the Catholic epistles and what is meant by the term? What is to be said about the style of the Epistle of St. James? What is to be said about its author? To whom is this epistle addressed? What sins does this epistle reprove? What is needed to overcome these sins? What words of Christ does St. James go back to? What is to be said about the new birth? What seeming contradiction appears at first glance between St. James and St. Paul? Show that there is no real contradiction. What works does Paul condemn? What works does James demand? Explain the difference between the word justification as used by Paul and by James? How are outward trials to be met? How are inward trials to be met? Through what means are our selfish desires to be conquered? How must the Word of God be received?

What is said about faith without works? What follows from true faith? How is strife to be avoided and peace secured? What exhortations are given to the rich and the poor respectively? What is to be prayed for? Give a summary of this epistle. What are its practical lessons?

I AND II PETER.

What is to be said of the general character of I Peter? What is to be said about its language and style? By whom was this letter composed for Peter? With what were the readers of this epistle to be impressed, and why? To whom was the epistle written? What was the occasion for the writing of this epistle? What was its purpose? What is its keynote? What exhortation is given to the pilgrims? What is said of the spiritual priesthood? In what various circumstances are believers exhorted to retain their dignity as a spiritual priesthood? How must the pure life of believers appear? Give a summary of this epistle. What are its practical lessons? What is to be said of the style of II Peter? What is to be said about the date when it was written? To whom was it addressed? What does it especially emphasize? Against whom are the Christians warned? What is the aim of II Peter? What admonitions does it give? Give a summary of II Peter. What are its practical lessons?

I, II, III JOHN, JUDE.

What is to be said about I John as an epistle? What is to be said of its style by way of comparison with the Gospel of John? By whom and where was it written? What is John's purpose in this epistle? To what danger are believers still exposed? What is needed in them? What is to be done with all spirits so that error may be avoided? What is the great error? What does the apostle desire the believers to have? How will this fellowship with God be manifest? What close relation does fellowship with God imply? What does sonship bring? How are men to be tried? When does the love come which keeps God's commandments? Give a summary of I John. What are its practical lessons? What is to be said of the style of II John? To whom is it addressed, and who is meant by the title? Over what fact does the apostle express his joy? To what does he exhort? Give a summary of II John. Give its practical lessons. What is to be said about the style and general character of III John? Wherein lies the importance of this letter? Give a summary of III John. What is to

be said about the author of the epistle of Jude? What is to be said in general of its contents and style? What important exhortation does Jude give to the Christians in view of false teachers? Give a summary of Jude. Give its practical lessons.

REVELATION.

What is to be said of the style and authorship of the book of Revelation? To whom was it first sent? What is to be said of the date when it was written? What is the aim of Revelation? What does it describe? Does it contain history or visions? What is to be said about the fulfillment of its visions? Give an account of the first vision. In how many visions is an account given of what shall be hereafter? Describe the first vision. Describe the second vision, concerning the seven trumpets. Describe the third vision, concerning the woman in the wilderness. Describe the fourth vision, concerning the seven vials of God's wrath. Describe the fifth vision, concerning the fall of Babylon. Describe the sixth vision, concerning the coming of the Lord. Describe the seventh vision, concerning the heavenly Jerusalem. Give a summary of the contents of Revelation. What are its practical lessons?

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT.

What does the Old Testament contain? How did men receive God's dealings? How does Jesus refer to the Old Testament? How does Peter refer to the Old Testament? How does Paul regard the Old Testament? What does the Epistle to the Hebrews unfold concerning the Old Testament? What Old Testament emblems does the Apocalypse contain? What is meant by the Pentateuch? What do the different books tell? What is to be said about the style of the Pentateuch? What is to be said about the authorship of the Pentateuch? How may the Bible be defined? To whom does the Old Testament look? The dealings of God with what people are recorded in the Old Testament? What is to be said about its record? What is the end and centre of the Old Testament? What are the practical lessons?

GENESIS.

Whom does Genesis introduce to us? How does it describe the work of creation? What is said concerning the creation of man? What was the occasion and the consequence of the fall into sin? What promise is given? What two lines of men arise? What punish-

ment did the corruption of men bring in the course of time? What family formed a new beginning of mankind? What kind of a covenant did God make with them? Name the three sons of Noah and the branches of the human race which sprang from them. Describe the nature and effects of the confusion of tongues at Babel. Through what race is the grace of God unfolded? What does Israel's history tell? Give an account of Abraham and his life-history. Give an account of Isaac. Give an account of Jacob. Give an account of Joseph. Whom does Joseph, rejected by his brethren, foreshadow? Give a brief summary of the teachings of Genesis. What practical lessons does it teach?

EXODUS.

What does Exodus tell about Israel in Egypt? Give an account of the early years of Moses. Give an account of Moses before Pharaoh. What does the Passover signify? Describe Israel's departure from Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea. Describe the journey to Mt. Sinai. Give an account of the laws given Israel at Mt. Sinai. Describe the sanctuary which God directed to have built. Describe the daily services. How did Israel break the covenant at Mt. Sinai? How was God's just wrath averted? Of whom did Moses thus become a type? Describe the completion of the sanctuary. Give a summary of Exodus. What are the practical lessons taught by Exodus?

LEVITICUS.

Name the five different sacrifices, and describe them. How must the priests be prepared for their work? What kind of persons must the priests be and why? Describe the high-priest and his apparel. Who are consecrated as priests? How were the sacrifices to be kindled? How was the lesson of cleanness of heart to be enforced? By what is the corruption of sin shown? Describe the annual day of atonement. By what are the laws of purification followed? How did God deal with the individual in Israel? In eating, what was to be avoided? What other directions for holy living were given? How were transgressors of the law treated? What sins were especially heinous? What is to be said about the holiness of priests? Mention the great festivals of the Israelites. With respect to the law, between what is Israel to choose? How are transgressors saved? Give a summary of the book. Give the practical lessons.

NUMBERS.

What is the general character of the contents of Numbers? Describe the taking of the census. What was a Nazarite? Describe the last happenings before the departure from Mt. Sinai. Describe the complaints of Israel and the consequences. Give an account of the murmuring of Aaron and Miriam against Moses. Give an account of the twelve spies. What punishment did God inflict on Israel for their unbelief? Mention a few of the occurrences during the forty years' wandering. Describe the rebellion of Korah. How was Aaron's right to the special priesthood confirmed? Mention some of the events after the forty years had passed. Give an account of Balaam's relation to Israel. Mention some of the events contained in the concluding chapters of Numbers. Give a summary of the book. Give its practical lessons.

DEUTERONOMY.

What is the general character of the book of Deuteronomy? What is the main content of Moses' first oration? Give a short description of Israel's conduct at Kadesh, and its consequences. What appeal does Moses make to Israel? Why was Moses not permitted to enter Canaan? How shall Israel retain God's favor? What are the contents of the second oration? How does Moses exhort them to behave in the promised land of Canaan? What laws and directions does Moses repeat? What does the third oration contain? What does Moses unfold in it? What curses would follow disobedience? What does the fourth oration contain? How does Moses encourage Israel in his farewell words? Who was appointed leader in Moses' place? How had God shown His care for Israel? How did God bring them to repentance when they sinned? What does the closing part of the book contain? Give a summary of the book. Give its practical lessons.

JOSHUA.

What can you tell about the prophetic-historical books of the Old Testament? Which is the first book in this class? What name is sometimes given to the first six books of the Bible? In what way was Joshua the inaugurator of a new era? Describe the circumstances attending Israel's entrance into the promised land. What city of Canaan was the first to fall into their hands? Describe the taking of Ai. Give an account of Israel's wars with the Canaanites. Give an

account of the division of Canaan among the tribes of Israel. To whom was Joshua's first farewell addressed and what did it contain? To whom was Joshua's second farewell addressed and what did it contain? Give a summary of the book of Joshua. Around what three thoughts does the book of Joshua move, and how are these three thoughts brought out? What are the practical lessons taught by this book?

JUDGES.

Describe in general the times of the Judges. Did the Israelites drive out all the Canaanites? What was the result of Israel's failure to drive out all the Canaanites? What does the main part of the book of Judges show? Mention the first oppression and deliverance of Israel. Describe the second oppression and deliverance of Israel. Give the history of Deborah and Barak. Give the history of Gideon. Give the story of Jephthah and his vow. Give the history of Samson. What two additional pictures are given by Judges? What lessons underlie the history of this period? What practical lessons are taught by this book? Describe the character of the book of Ruth. Give an account of its contents. What lessons does the history give us to teach? What are the practical lessons to be learned from the book of Ruth?

I SAMUEL.

What is the general character of the first and second books of Samuel? Why are they named after Samuel? What are they called in the Greek and Latin translations? Give an account of the birth and childhood of Samuel. Give an account of Eli and his sons. What punishment came upon Eli and his sons? What fitted Samuel for his prophetic work? Describe the loss and restoration of the Ark. Give an account of Israel's demand for a king and the anointing of Saul. Describe Saul's disobedience and his rejection by God. Describe the rise of David. Give an account of David's flight from Saul's persecutions. What does this book show? What practical lessons does it teach?

II SAMUEL.

Describe the events connected with David's reign over Judah. Give an account of David's reign over all Israel. What promise was given to David? What great sins did David commit? What prophet reproved

him and how? Give an account of Absalom's rebellion. How did David gain time to prepare for defence? What was Absalom's fate? What accounts are given in the concluding chapters of the book? How does David speak of God in his mighty Psalm of Praise? What other sin of David is yet mentioned, and what resulted from that sin? Give a summary of the second book of Samuel. What does the life of David unfold? What practical lessons may we learn from this book?

I KINGS.

What story does the books of Kings continue? What is their main content? How do they divide their attention between the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah? What is to be said about their general character and style? With whose reign does I Kings open? Give an account of the establishment of Solomon on the throne. Give an account of Solomon at the height of his power and glory. Give an account of the building of the temple. What else is to be said about Solomon's building enterprises? Describe the dedication of the temple. What promise is given to Solomon? Describe the decay of Solomon's kingdom. Describe the division of the kingdom. Describe the doings of Jeroboam. Describe the conduct of Rehoboam and his son. Give an account of Asa. Mention the five succeeding kings. Why was the friendship between the two kingdoms dangerous? Give an account of Ahab. Describe the work of Elijah. Tell what you know about Ahab and Naboth's vineyard. Give a summary of I Kings. What are its practical lessons?

II KINGS.

What story does II Kings continue? With what account does it open? Describe Elijah's departure from the world. Give the name and an account of the early doings of Elijah's successor. Mention some of his later miracles. How long does the conflict between the two kingdoms continue? Describe Jehu's work. Give an account of Jehoash. Give an account of Amaziah. What happened to the kingdom of Israel? How long did the kingdom of Judah endure after that of Israel was destroyed? Give an account of Hezekiah and Sennacherib. Who was the noblest king of Judah? Give an account of him. Give an account of Jehoiakim. Give an account of Jehoiachin. Give an account of the fall of the kingdom of Judah. Give a summary of this book. Give the practical lessons taught by this book.

I AND II CHRONICLES.

Describe the general character of the books of Chronicles. Give some idea of the genealogical tables contained in I Chronicles. What does the writer desire to show by his genealogies? Why were such lessons needed? From whose life and work was Israel to draw its first and largest inspiration? How does David use his power and influence? Describe the bringing back of the ark. Why was David not permitted to build the temple? What preparations for the building of the temple does David make? Describe the last scenes in David's life. How is Solomon first shown? Describe Solomon's work of building the temple. Describe the dedication of the temple. What is the purpose of these books of Chronicles? What side of history is told? How are the lives of the good kings regarded? What was the aim of the writers? What forms the centre of the history? What is made prominent in these accounts; why? How is God portrayed in these books? What are the practical lessons?

EZRA.

What other book originally formed one with Ezra? What is to be said about the language of Ezra? In what language was part of Ezra originally written? What is to be said about the authorship of Ezra? Of what two parts does the book of Ezra consist? Give an account of the return of the Jews to Palestine. Give an account of the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple. Give an account of affairs after Ezra came to Jerusalem. Does Ezra give a complete history of the return of the Jews? To what account is the most space given? What was it the purpose of Ezra to describe? How only could Israel be a blessing to the nations? Give a summary of the book of Ezra. What practical lessons are taught by this book?

NEHEMIAH—ESTHER.

What is the exact title of the book of Nehemiah? What is to be said of its authorship? Describe the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. Describe some of the hindrances with which the building had to contend. Give an account of the restoration of order by Nehemiah. Give an account of Nehemiah's second return from Shushan to Jerusalem. Give a summary of the book of Nehemiah. What are the practical lessons taught by this book? Describe the character of the book of Esther. Describe the manner in which Esther became queen.

Describe the conduct of Haman. What plot did Haman form? How did Haman unintentionally help to exalt Mordecai, whom he hated? How was Haman's plot frustrated and what became of him? What festival did the Jews afterwards celebrate and why? What is the purpose of the book of Esther? What are its practical lessons?

JOB.

Describe the character of the book of Job. What keynote does it strike? Into what great question does it inquire? What is contained in the prologue? What contest ensues between Job and his friends? With what assertion does Eliphaz begin? What reason do the friends of Job, in their first attempt, assign for suffering? In their second attempt, what do Job's friends seek to do? How does Job receive their words? Give an account of their third attempt. Who now gives the human answer to the problem? What does Elihu say sufferings are? What does God ask Job to do? What does creation show? In his second reply, what does God unfold? How does God treat Job's three friends? What does he restore to Job? What then is God's final answer concerning suffering? Why is the righteous tried? What is the object of chastisement? Are the sufferings of the righteous a result of God's wrath; of what, then? What does submission to suffering testify before men and Satan? What is the final and full answer of the hoping glimpses of the Old Testament? What practical lessons are taught by this book?

PSALMS.

What can you say about the structure of the Psalms? Describe Hebrew poetry. What are the Psalms? What do the superscriptions of the Psalms contain? Mention the authors of the Psalms and how many each composed. What is the character of the Psalms of David? What do they show? What is the difference in style between his earlier and later Psalms? Describe David's penitential Psalms. What is the character of David's latest Psalms? How many books do the Psalms form? What two moral problems do the Psalms present? Mention the different classes of Psalms. Tell what you know of the Messianic Psalms. What references to the Psalms are found in the New Testament? What is to be said about the use of the Psalms by the Church? Wherein does their great value as a treasury of devotion consist? What does Luther say of the Psalms? What practical lessons do they teach?

PROVERBS.

What are the Proverbs? Who was the most noted originator of Proverbs? Describe their structure. What do the Proverbs teach? What does the first section contain? How do they contrast wisdom and folly? What does the second section contain? What other men beside Solomon contributed to the Proverbs? What is the central thought of the Proverbs? How may this wisdom be best characterized? What do the Proverbs have to say with regard to right social relations? What sins are especially warned against? What do the Proverbs have to say about the home, the maintenance of order, the place and character of woman? Define wisdom. Whence is it? In whom does wisdom find its fulfillment? Give a summary of the book of Proverbs. What are its practical lessons?

ECCLESIASTES.

What is to be said of the style and authorship of this book? What is its fundamental theme? What is the conclusion to which the vanity of earthly things should lead us? What does this book show with respect to the old and new covenants? Of how many essays does the book consist? What does the first essay contain? What does the second essay contain? What does the third essay contain? How is the wise man to conduct himself under earthly hardships? What does the fourth essay contain? What is said about work? What is said about remembering God? Give a summary of the book. What are its practical lessons?

SONG OF SONGS.

What is to be said of the authorship of this book? What is to be said of the style in which it is written? Give an account of its structure. What is the story about which this idyl is woven? Of how many parts does it consist? Describe the Wedding Day. Describe the Bride's Memories. Describe the day of betrothal. Describe the troubled dream. What is the fifth part of this song? What is the sixth part? What is the seventh part? What is the object of this story of love? Of what is it a type? Give a summary of the book. What are its practical lessons?

ISAIAH.

Which are the "later prophets," and why are they so named? Why are these writings to be distinguished from the historical-prophetic

books? Who are called the greater prophets? Who is the mightiest representative of the prophets? Describe the style in which his book is written. What difference in style exists between the earlier and later chapters of Isaiah. How may this difference in style be accounted for? What four great events influenced the prophecies of Isaiah? What six groups of prophecies does the book contain? What is the purpose of the whole book of Isaiah? Why must Israel be punished? Who shall be saved from destruction? What three stages of deliverance does Isaiah foresee? What does Isaiah teach concerning God? What is God's purpose? What does Isaiah have to say concerning the Messiah? Why is Isaiah called the evangelist of the Old Testament? Give a summary of this book. Give its practical lessons.

JEREMIAH—LAMENTATIONS.

Who is the second great prophet? What can you tell of his life and work? What can you say about the date of his prophecies? What is to be said of the style of Jeremiah's prophecies? What is the purpose of Jeremiah? What was the cause of Israel's rejection? How would this rejection be carried out? Mention some of the truths taught by this book. What does it say concerning the Messiah? Give a summary of Jeremiah. What practical lessons are taught by Jeremiah? What are the characteristics of Lamentations? What does Jeremiah say in these Lamentations? Give an account of the contents of this book. To whom do the wretchedness and sorrow painted in Lamentations point? What practical lessons are taught by Lamentations?

EZEKIEL.

What particulars can you give about the prophet Ezekiel? What is to be said of the style of his book? What is a remarkable feature of Ezekiel? Give the order in which the prophecies of Ezekiel follow one another. What is the purpose of Ezekiel? What does the introduction unfold? How is the judgment of Jerusalem to be regarded? Describe the restoration which is promised to Israel. What mighty vision is given in chapters 40—48? How does Ezekiel portray God? What is God carrying out, and how? To whom will He show mercy? About whom does the highest hope center? How is the Messiah described? Give a summary of the book of Ezekiel. What are its practical lessons?

DANIEL.

What is to be said about the author of this book? What evidence of Daniel's authorship does this book give? What is to be said about the language of Daniel? What is the purpose of Daniel. Of what two parts does the book consist? Give in brief the history contained in the book of Daniel. What is the first vision given? What is the second vision? What is the third vision? What is the fourth vision? What does the book of Daniel show? How is the Messiah exhibited? Give summary of the book of Daniel. What practical lessons does it teach?

HOSEA.

Which are the minor prophets and why are they so called? Tell what you know about the prophet Hosea. What is to be said concerning the character of his writings? What does Hosea contain? Under what figure is God described? What will God do unto Israel and why? What is the central theme of the second part of Hosea? What promise is given? How is Israel's sin described? What does God seek to do with Israel? Describe His dealings with Israel. What do these dealings reveal? What reference does Hosea make to the Messiah? Give a summary of the book. Give its practical lessons.

JOEL.

Tell what you know about Joel. When did he prophesy? What is to be said of the language and style of Joel? What is the purpose of Joel? Into what two parts is his book divided? What does the first part contain? What does the second part contain? How may the book of Joel be characterized? What does he say about the calamities of life? How is God's favor to be found? What truth brought out prominently by Joel runs through all prophecy? On the conception of what great event has Joel exercised a powerful influence? Under what images is the end described? What great promise is given? Give a summary of Joel. Give the practical lessons.

AMOS—OBADIAH.

Tell what you know about Amos. What is to be said of the state of affairs in Amos' time? What is to be said of the language of Amos? What illustrations is he fond of using? What is the central theme of Amos? What message does he deliver? What five visions does he relate? What does he announce in conclusion? What truths

does Amos teach? Give a summary of Amos. Give the practical lessons. When did Obadiah prophesy? What did Obadiah prophesy? What does his single message contain? Give a summary of Obadiah. Give the practical lessons.

JONAH—MICAH.

What can you say about Jonah? What can you tell of the two miracles recorded in the book of Jonah? Wherein is the prophecy found in the book of Jonah? What was Jonah's purpose in writing? Give an outline of the contents of the book of Jonah. What is said in the New Testament of the repenting Ninevites? Give a summary of the book of Jonah. Give its practical lessons. Tell what you know about Micah. Of whom does Micah remind us and in what respects? What are the characteristics of Micah? What is Micah's purpose? What warning does he give? What promise does he give? What is to be said of Micah's Messianic promises? Give a summary of Micah. Give the practical lessons.

NAHUM—HABAKKUK.

Tell what you know about Nahum. What are the characteristics of his prophecy? What is the burden of Nahum's prophecy? Why shall Nineveh be destroyed? What is promised to Judah? Give a summary of Nahum. Give the practical lessons. What can you tell about Habakkuk? What is to be said of the style of Habakkuk? What is the aim of Habakkuk? What are the contents of Habakkuk? How shall the just live? What are the fundamental thoughts of this book? What is to be said of Habakkuk's message and Paul's relation to it? Give a summary of Habakkuk. What are the practical lessons?

ZEPHANIAH—HAGGAI.

Tell what you know about Zephaniah and his times. What is to be said of the language of Zephaniah? What does the book of Zephaniah contain? What warning, what invitation and what promise does the prophet give? What is to be said about Zephaniah's message? How is the universal outlook of Zephaniah shown? What does he say about the coming salvation? Give a summary of the book. Give its practical lessons. What is there to be said about Haggai and his prophecies? What is the theme of Haggai? Why was the rebuilding of the temple important? What prophecy concerning the future does Haggai make? Give a summary of the book. Give its practical lessons.

ZECHARIAH.

Tell what you know of Zechariah? What is to be said of the language of Zechariah? What does Zechariah tell for Israel's comfort? What does he show first? Give the seven visions. What is God's command to His people? What does the prophet say about the good shepherd and his sheep? What does he say of the Holy City and Jehovah's glory? What is to be said of Zechariah's outlook? What has Zechariah been called, and why? What name is given to the Messiah? Mention some of the events foretold by Zechariah, concerning the Messiah. What prophecy is made concerning Israel's future? Give a summary of the book. Give the practical lessons.

MALACHI.

What is to be said of Malachi and his times? Describe the style in which the book of Malachi is written. What is Malachi's aim? What does he describe first? Mention some of Israel's wrongdoings. Who does the prophet say are coming? How shall the "Angel of the Covenant" come to such a people as Israel? What does the prophet call on the people to do? Who will come before the judgment of separation? To what new danger was Israel beginning to be exposed? What does the prophet have to say about the Gentiles? What is needed for Israel? Who was this second Elijah? Give a summary of the book. Give its practical lessons.

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